Local Development Plan – Draft Topic Paper

Living Well Locally
May 2025

Introduction

Thanks for taking an interest in this Topic Paper, which is part of the evidence we're drawing together for our new Local Development Plan. The following notes explain what the Topic Papers cover and how these fit into the process to prepare the new Plan. At the bottom of the notes, you will find a list of guidance and information should you wish further details.

What is a Topic Paper?

The first stage in preparing a new Local Development Plan is the evidence gathering stage, which is the stage we are currently in. This involves collating information on key relevant policies, strategies and data for an Evidence Report which the National Park Authority has to submit to the Scottish Government for a review that is called a 'gate check'. This to ensure that sufficient information is available to start preparing a new Local Development Plan. The next step, after the gate check, is preparing a Proposed Plan which will set out policies, proposals and priorities which will be formally issued for a period of consultation.

To break the gathered evidence up into manageable blocks, we have created 10 Topic Papers by grouping the most closely related national planning policies of NPF4 (see Table below). Each of these 10 Topic Papers aim to summarise relevant national, regional and local evidence and information for the given topic area. Whilst we have grouped these national planning policies into 10 Topic Papers we fully acknowledge that there are overlaps and linkages between these policies; for example, matters such as climate, nature, and flooding are of relevance to all of the topic areas. We have aimed to highlight these links, where explicit, in the Topic Papers.

How are the Topic Papers structured?

The Topic Papers cover all National Planning Framework 4's policies, as summarised in the table below.

Topic paper 1: Climate and Land Use	Topic paper 2: Biodiversity, Natural Places, and Forestry, Woodland and Trees	Topic paper 3: Infrastructure First	Topic paper 4: Flooding, Water Management and Blue and Green infrastructure	Topic paper 5: Energy, and Heat and Cooling
1. Tackling the Climate and Nature Crisis 2. Climate Mitigation and Adaptation 5. Soils 10. Coastal Development Land Use	3. Biodiversity 4. Natural Places 6. Forestry, Woodland and Trees	18. Infrastructure First 24. Digital Infrastructure	22. Flood Risk and Water Management 20. Blue and Green Infrastructure	11. Energy 19. Heat and Cooling
Topic paper 6: Sustainable Transport	**Topic paper 7: Housing**	**Topic paper 8: Living Well Locally**	**Topic paper 9: Cultural Heritage and Place**	**Topic paper 10: Rural Economy**
13. Sustainable Transport	16. Quality Homes 17. Rural Homes	15. Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods 23. Health and Safety 9. Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings 21. Play, recreation and sport 12. Zero Waste	14. Design, Quality and Place 7. Historic Assets and Places 31. Culture and Creativity	29. Rural Development 30. Tourism 28. Retail 27. City, town, local and commercial centres 26. Business and Industry 32. Aquaculture 33. Minerals 25. Community Wealth Building

Each of the Topic Papers has the same format, as follows:

- List of the relevant sections of the Planning Act (and any other relevant legislation and statutory requirements);

- Links to the Evidence that informs that Topic Paper;

- Context of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP)

- Summary of the selected Evidence for that Topic Paper;

- Implications that the Evidence presents for the preparation of the new Local Development Plan.

Additional sections in the Papers (i.e. Summary of Stakeholder Engagement & Statement of Agreement/Dispute) will be added upon the completion of this engagement phase and prior to the completion of the Evidence Report and its submission to Scottish Government.

It is important to note that the Topic Papers do not present any proposals– such as proposed sites for development. As these Papers are technical and follow a structure and template required by the Scottish Government, an additional 6 Area Summaries have also been prepared. These are separate map-based reports which have been designed to provide a summary of how this technical content relates to different areas of the National Park, for the series of in-person workshops during May and June. These also include a summary of the Local Place Plans prepared by communities, which the majority of communities have either prepared or are under preparation. While these reports will be primarily be used at in-person workshops, they will also included on the website if you would prefer to feedback on those.

The Topic Papers are engagement drafts, these are not the final ones that we will include within our Evidence Report. The Topic Papers have been prepared by National Park staff with advice and comments incorporated where possible from public bodies such as SEPA, Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot, Transport Scotland and the Councils that cover the National Park. Where data or information has not been available, incomplete or is currently in the process of being finalised, this has been highlighted in the Topic Paper and where relevant this will be actioned for the final versions for the Evidence Report.

We are now sharing the Topic Papers with wider stakeholders who would like to review and provide us with feedback, helping us to identify any gaps or pieces of evidence we should also consider for the Evidence Report. This feedback can be given by filling in the survey available on our website.

The Topic Papers are technical and present a lot of information.   This is due to their nature as baseline information to be reviewed by Scottish Government, as the foundation for the new Local Development Plan. We have also created shorter map-based summaries for different areas of the Park to be more accessible, as introduced above.

Feedback will help finalise the Topic Papers. Once we have completed the 8-week engagement period, we will review all the responses we have received. We will make changes to the Topic Papers where required and collate these into the full Evidence Report, which will also summarise the outcomes of our engagement. It is this full – finalised - Evidence Report that the Park Authority Board will need to approve before it can be submitted to the Scottish Government for review at the 'gate check'.

Next stage. Once we have received Scottish Government's feedback on whether we can either proceed or need to amend the Report the next stage is preparing the Proposed Plan (draft Local Development Plan). As noted already, there will be formal public consultation on the Proposed Plan.

Further information

[Scottish Government's Guidance on preparing a Local Development Plan](#)

[National Planning Framework 4](#)

[Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Development Plan Scheme](#)

Contact
If you need help with any of the above or have queries on the Topic Papers, please contact localdevplan2@lochlomond-trossachs.org or call us on 01389 722600.

Issue: Topic/Place	Topic Paper 8 – Living Well Locally
Information required by the Act regarding the issue addressed in this section	**Policy 9 - Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings -** The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended: • Section15 (5) the physical and environmental characteristics of the district **Policy 12 - Zero Waste -** The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended • the infrastructure of the district; and • How that infrastructure is used • Regulation 9 – have regard to the national waste management plan **Policy 15 - Local Living and 20 Minute Neighborhoods -** The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended: • Section 15(5) the principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district. • Section 15(2A) a statement of the planning authority's policies and proposals as to the provision of public conveniences. • Section 15(2B) a statement of the planning authority's policies and proposals as to the provision of water refill locations. **Policy 21 - Play, Recreation and Sport -** The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended, Section 16D(1): • a planning authority must assess the sufficiency of play opportunities in its area for children in preparing an Evidence Report. • The Town and Country Planning (Play Sufficiency Assessment)(Scotland) Regulations 2023 set out the form and content of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA); the persons who must be consulted in preparing the PSA; and the publication of the PSA. • Regulation 9 – have regard to any open space strategy

	Policy 23 - Health and Safety - The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) (Act) 1997, as amended, Section 15(5): • the size, composition, health and distribution of the population of the district; • the health needs of the population of the district; • the infrastructure of the district (including health care facilities); and • how that infrastructure is used. • Regulation 9 – have regard to location of control of major accident hazard establishments/pipelines Other relevant legislation • The Aims of National Parks in Scotland (as set out in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000)
Links to Evidence	**National Park Partnership Plan** National Park Partnership Plan 2024-2029 **Policy 9 – Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings** Vacant and Derelict Land in Scotland Open Mosaic Habitats High Value Guidance: When is Brownfield Land of High Environmental Value? Local Development Plan 2017-2021 (policies) Explore the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey LLTNP Vacant and Derelict Land Audit 2019 Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2022 – Site Register LLTNPA Vacant and Derelict Land Register Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2022

	[LLTNP Buildings at Risk Register](#) [LLTNP Buildings at Risk Maps](#) [Vacant-and-Derelict-land-audit-2018-for-Web_-V0.pdf](#) [Your Search Results	Buildings at Risk Register](#) [NPF 4 Data Atlas](#) [Contaminated land	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)](#) [UKradon - UK maps of radon](#) **Policy 12 – Zero Waste** [Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (www.gov.scot)](#) [Making Things Last: a circular economy strategy for Scotland - gov.scot](#) [Stop, Sort, Burn, Bury - incineration in the waste hierarchy: independent review - gov.scot](#) [10 year strategy	Stirling Council](#) [Argyll and Bute Waste Strategy](#) [West Dunbartonshire Council Waste Strategy 2023 - 2028](#) [Perth_and_Kinross_Waste_Management_Plan](#) [Household Waste (sepa.org.uk)](#) [scottish-household-waste-generated-and-managed-data-tables.xlsx](#) [Waste Capacity](#) [https://informatics.sepa.org.uk/WasteSiteCapacity/](#)

	[Local Development Plan 2017-2021 (policies)](#)

[Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority Fleet Management Audit](#)

[Litter Prevention Strategy 2020 - 2023 (lochlomond-trossachs.org)](#)

[Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Waste Management Facilities](#)

Policy 15 – Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods

[Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Local Living and 20 minute neighbourhoods](#)

[Briefing: Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

[Living Well Locally - 20 Minute Communities in the Highlands and Islands](#)

[20 Minute Neighbourhoods in a Scottish Context](#)

[Local Development Plan 2017-2021 (policies)](#)

[Local Development Plan Settlements](#)

[20 Minute neighbourhood Vision](#)

[Active Travel — Drymen Village Website](#)

[SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation)](#)

[The Scottish Living Locally Data Portal (SLLDP) (arcgis.com)](#)

[HITRANS 20 Minute Neighbourhoods Study](#)

[Find My Nearest Tap - Scottish Water](#)

[Priority Places for Food Index](#)

[Scottish Government – School Estates Supplementary Statistics 2024](#) |

	GP Practice Contact Details and List Sizes 2020 and 2025
	Policy 21 – Play, Recreation and Sport
	Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision - Play Scotland
	Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Action Plan - Play Scotland
	A More Active Scotland: Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan
	Local Development Plan 2017-2021 (policies)
	Settlement maps (jpegs)
	LLTOS Final Audit report_August
	Scottish Household Survey 2022 Physical Activity Participation
	Policy 23 – Health and Safety
	Public Health Priorities for Scotland
	Place and wellbeing: integrating land use planning
	A Healthier Future – Scotland's Diet & Healthy Weight Delivery Plan
	Mental Health Strategy: 2017-2027
	Briefing: Place and Wellbeing Outcomes
	creating-hope-together-scotlands-suicide-prevention-action-plan-2022-2025.pdf
	National Guidance on Action to Address Suicides at Locations of Concern
	Cleaner Air For Scotland 2: Towards a Better Place for Everyone
	Long-term Monitoring of Health Inequalities

	The Scottish Public Health Profiles
	Health Boards
	Health and Social Care Partnerships
	SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation)
	NHS-accident-emergency-travel-time-map - Scotland's data on a map
	Anti-depressant prescriptions
	Locations of Control or Major Accident Hazard Establishments and/or pipelines
	Home page	Scottish Air Quality
	Noise Pollution

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Context

This topic paper focuses on the information and considerations which concern residents of the National Park within a grouping of policy areas set out in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). Content is included on overall health and wellbeing of those who live within The Park and as vacant and derelict land, access to open space and play provision contribute towards improved health outcomes, these policy areas have been included in this paper too. Considering the National Park is covered by four local authorities who have the statutory responsibility for some of the areas covered within this topic paper (such as domestic and commercial waste collection and disposal) their strategies and management plans have been key sources.

NPF4 sets out a new plan for Scotland in 2050. NPF4 focuses on three themes: Sustainable places, Liveable places and Productive places. The following policies have been selected for inclusion within this topic paper.

Policy 9 Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings:

NPF4 places a significant emphasis and priority to the redevelopment of brownfield sites. NPF4 defines "brownfield" as land which has previously been developed. This covers vacant or derelict land, and land occupied by redundant or unused buildings. The redevelopment

or reuse of brownfield sites and buildings for housing or businesses can bring unused or underutilised sites back into productive use and reduce the need for expansion onto greenfield land.

Policy 12 Zero Waste:

NPF4 Policy 12 Zero Waste seeks to encourage, promote and facilitate development that is consistent with the waste hierarchy to reduce, reuse and recycle materials. The Local Authorities have a key role in delivering the necessary infrastructure in the right locations to achieve ambitious targets for reducing waste and increasing recycling. The Scottish Government previously set a 60% household recycling target by 2020, and an all-waste recycling target of 70% by 2025. Scottish household recycling rates grew by an average of 9% per year between 2005 and 2010. However, in more recent years progress has slowed.

Policy 15 Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods:

NPF4 includes a specific policy on Local Living and 20-minute neighbourhoods, although it is recognised that this is a cross-cutting policy, and a number of other areas will contribute to this policy requirement. The policy aims to 'To encourage, promote and facilitate the application of the Place Principle and create connected and compact neighbourhoods where people can meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home, preferably by walking, wheeling or cycling or using sustainable transport options'. This is further qualified; 'LDPs should support local living, including 20-minute neighbourhoods within settlements, through the spatial strategy, associated site briefs and masterplans. The approach should take into account the local context, consider the varying settlement patterns and reflect the particular characteristics and challenges faced by each place. Communities and businesses will have an important role to play in informing this, helping to strengthen local living through their engagement with the planning system.' Policy 15 also provides a list of criteria that should be considered when determining planning proposals. This suggests elements to consider to ensure that proposal will contribute to local living. This includes local access, but is not limited to:

- sustainable modes of transport including local public transport and safe, high-quality walking, wheeling and cycling networks;
- employment;
- shopping;
- health and social care facilities;
- childcare, schools and lifelong learning opportunities;
- playgrounds and informal play opportunities, parks, green streets and spaces, community gardens, opportunities for food growth and allotments, sport and recreation facilities;
- publicly accessible toilets;

- affordable and accessible housing options, ability to age in place and housing diversity.

The above criteria will provide a framework to explore Local Living and through mapping, a methodology can be developed to deliver Local Living across the National Park.

Policy 21 Play, Recreation and Sport:

NPF4 aims to encourage and support play, recreation, and sport by improving natural and built environments with equitable access to facilities, enhancing physical and mental health. Local Development Plans should identify sites for sports and outdoor recreation based on community needs, Play Sufficiency Assessments, and Open Space Strategies. These spaces should integrate with blue and green infrastructure while considering relevant plans such as flood risk management. All new provisions must be well-designed, high-quality, accessible, and inclusive.

Policy 23 Health and Safety:

This NPF4 policy aims to protect people and places from environmental harm, mitigate safety risks, and promote development that enhances health and wellbeing. It seeks to improve health, reduce inequalities, and ensure safe environments while supporting planned health infrastructure. Local Development Plans should address health inequalities, particularly in disadvantaged areas, by identifying necessary health and social care services in collaboration with relevant authorities. LDPs should promote healthier lifestyles through exercise opportunities, community food growing, and suicide prevention awareness. Additionally, spatial strategies should ensure safe distances between hazardous sites and public or environmentally sensitive areas.

National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) 2024 – 2029 Context

Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings

The National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) highlights the importance of addressing brownfield, vacant, derelict land, and empty buildings within Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park as part of its sustainable development and nature restoration strategies. A key focus is on prioritising the repurposing and redevelopment of brownfield and derelict sites to reduce environmental impacts, restore degraded landscapes, and support local economies. Strategies for vacant and derelict land emphasise assessing and incorporating these sites into development plans to bring them back into productive use, contributing to regeneration efforts while reducing visual and environmental

blight. The Plan also stresses the importance of evaluating the biodiversity value of long term vacant and derelict sites, as some may have naturalised and become ecosystems hosting diverse species and may merit alternatives to redevelopment.

Zero Waste

The NPPP highlights zero waste and waste management within Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park as essential to achieving sustainability and addressing environmental challenges. It emphasises promoting circular economy practices by encouraging waste reduction through reuse, recycling, and upcycling, with a focus on minimising landfill waste, and supporting local businesses and communities in adopting principles that reduce waste generation and environmental impact. Efforts to tackle litter and pollution include improving waste management infrastructure in high-footfall areas and raising community and visitor awareness about responsible disposal and waste reduction. The National Park aligns with Scotland's zero waste targets by promoting sustainable practices, developing strategies for renewable energy use, and reducing reliance on single-use plastics. Collaboration with local authorities, businesses, and community groups is central to creating an effective waste management strategy, alongside investments in education and outreach to ensure that both residents and visitors understand the importance of waste reduction.

Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods

The NPPP discusses local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods as crucial strategies for creating sustainable, thriving communities within The National Park. It emphasises the importance of designing communities where residents can meet most of their daily needs locally, reducing reliance on cars and supporting lower-carbon lifestyles. The concept aligns with broader goals to foster stronger social connections, improve health and well-being, and enhance the local economy through the provision of accessible services, jobs, and amenities.

Play, Recreation and Sport

The NPPP emphasises the importance of play, recreation, and sport in Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park as integral to promoting health, well-being, and enjoyment of the natural environment. It highlights efforts to enhance opportunities for outdoor recreation and ensure accessibility for people of all ages and abilities. This involves the development and maintenance of high-quality recreational infrastructure, including paths, trails, and facilities that support active lifestyles.

The plan also focuses on increasing participation in recreational activities, reducing barriers to access, and fostering a stronger connection between people and nature. Encouraging responsible outdoor activities is a priority, aligning with sustainability goals and protecting The Park's natural beauty and biodiversity.

Health and Safety

The NPPP emphasises health and safety in Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park as a critical component of ensuring the well-being of both residents and visitors. It highlights the importance of promoting safe and responsible access to The Park's natural and recreational assets, supported by well-maintained infrastructure such as paths, trails, and visitor facilities.

The plan addresses health by encouraging outdoor activities that contribute to physical and mental well-being while ensuring the natural environment is preserved and accessible to all. This includes targeted efforts to reduce hazards associated with natural events like flooding, landslides, and wildfires, as these can have significant impacts on communities, infrastructure, and visitor safety.

Summary of Evidence

This Topic Paper is divided into five sections, reflecting National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Policies, each pulling together the relevant policies and data for the National Park area.

The policy areas are:

- Policy 9 – Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings
- Policy 12 – Zero Waste
- Policy 15 – Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods
- Policy 21 – Play, Recreation and Sport
- Policy 23 – Health and Safety

It is also important to acknowledge that there is overlap between the Living Well Locally paper and policy areas explored within other Topic Papers. The relevant Topic Papers that should be read in conjunction with this paper are:

- Topic Paper 3 – Infrastructure First and Digital Infrastructure
- Topic Paper 4 – Blue and Green Infrastructure

- Topic Paper 9 – Historic Assets and Design, Quality and Place

Policy 9 – Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings

This section of the topic paper provides the location of vacant and derelict sites, data on the make-up of Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL), identifies trends in the re-use of VDL and places this information within the framework of policies and guidance regarding brownfield sites. An overview of contaminated land and major accident Hazard establishments and / or pipelines is also shown.

National Policy Context

This section details some of the National policy and research which will influence the policy direction of the new Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Local Development Plan.

Vacant and Derelict Land in Scotland

In February 2019, the Scottish Land Commission published research which considered the harms caused by vacant and derelict land (VDL) on communities and to develop a framework which could be used for assessing the impact of VDL.

The report states that in 2018, VDL in Scotland covered over 11,000 hectares, with 75% located within settlements. It also draws on figures which demonstrate that a significant proportion of the population, especially in deprived areas, lives within 500 meters of VDL. The report goes into detail about the effects of VDL on communities, the health of the population, the economy etc:

- Health: VDL is linked to poorer physical and mental health outcomes, including stress and anxiety, often exacerbated in deprived communities.

- Environment: Contaminants in VDL pose risks to soil, air, and water quality. Neglected sites can also diminish local perceptions of the area.

- Economy: VDL affects property values and discourages investment, with remediation costs often deterring development.

- Community: VDL impacts perceptions of safety and wellbeing. Long-term vacancy contributes to a decline in community morale and resilience.

The report emphasises the need for coordinated action across government, private developers, and communities to transform VDL into assets that benefit local areas. By addressing the harms and leveraging the potential of these sites, Scotland aims to foster sustainable community development.

Open mosaic habitats high value guidance: when is brownfield land of 'high environmental value'?

A report written by Wildlife and Countryside Link - *Open Mosaic Habitats High Value Guidance: When is Brownfield Land of 'High Environmental Value'?* - provides guidance on assessing whether brownfield land is of high environmental value, particularly regarding biodiversity. It addresses the balance between redeveloping brownfield sites for economic purposes and preserving those that serve as vital habitats for wildlife.

Brownfield land is previously developed land, often considered for regeneration. However, some brownfield sites have significant ecological value, supporting rare and threatened species. These sites often provide important habitats in urban areas, acting as refuges for wildlife and as accessible green spaces for local communities.

NPF4 encourages the reuse of brownfield land for development, provided it does not hold high environmental value. However, the lack of a clear definition of "high environmental value" has led to confusion and loss of wildlife-rich brownfield sites.

The document sets out some criteria for High Environmental Value. A brownfield site is considered of high environmental value if:

- It contains priority habitats, as listed under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
- It holds nature conservation designations like Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Local Wildlife Sites.
- It supports biodiversity, particularly the open mosaic habitats on previously developed land (OMHPDL), which are crucial for various species including rare invertebrates, plants, and reptiles.

While a small percentage (6-8%) of brownfield sites are of high environmental value, protecting these sites is crucial for biodiversity. The document argues that safeguarding such areas would not significantly hinder brownfield development overall, but would prevent inappropriate development on ecologically important sites.

Apart from biodiversity, brownfield sites can offer recreational spaces for communities and contribute to ecosystem services like carbon sequestration, water cycle regulation, and microclimate moderation.

Local Context

Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance

The Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance developed by the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (SEHP) aims to support local authorities in Scotland to bring empty homes back into use through a more strategic and integrated approach. Created in collaboration with housing consultancy Arneil Johnston, the document offers advisory guidance and a flexible framework that each local authority can adapt to suit their local needs and context. It aligns closely with national housing policies, including the Scottish Government's "Housing to 2040" strategy, and supports objectives such as increasing affordable housing supply, regenerating communities, and contributing to climate goals through sustainable housing reuse. It is noted that each of the four local authorities that cover the National Park has an Empty Homes officer who is responsible for encouraging property owners to sell or let their empty properties.

National Park Context

This section details the specific context of vacant and derelict land within the National Park. Initially the section specifies the current policy position of The National Park and then provides site specific information and data.

The Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey

The Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS) is updated annually each autumn with data returns from Scottish local authorities to the Scottish Government and published the following spring. It involves reporting the annual change in the take-up of brownfield land and recording new sites which have become vacant or derelict. These are mapped and various details are recorded for them, including the former use of the land, the likelihood of it coming back into use and how soon this may take place. Sites are categorised according to whether they are:

- *Vacant land* – brownfield sites which are ready for new development, and which must be within settlements; or
- *Derelict land* – brownfield sites which can either be inside or outside settlements, but are not ready for new development, for example due to the presence of unusable buildings.

SVDLS sites include those that are allocated for employment use or housing or are windfall sites where developers have pursued planning applications for housing but work on site has not yet started or has stalled. The SVLDS requires Local Authorities to identify sites that have been removed from the survey since the last return, for example due to development on them commencing or due to them becoming naturalised. The SVDLS does not include vacant brownfield sites that are out with settlement boundaries.

The National Park contributes annually to the SVDLS process and submitted the most recent return October 2024. The most recent submission shows no real change from the previous vacant and derelict land survey and lists 8 sites that cover a cumulative area of 7.26ha. A map of these sites has been linked above. All the vacant and derelict land within the National Park has been allocated in the previous Local Development Plan to encourage development on site

Several vacant and derelict sites across different locations have been identified for potential development. The following information is from The Park Authority's 2024 SCDLS return. In Lochearnhead, the Station Cottages site (0.92 ha), previously used for transport, remains derelict under private ownership with no planning updates, while the Holiday Centre site (0.56 ha) has planning permission for 12 homes but remains undeveloped. In Carrick Castle, a former hotel site (0.53 ha) has been vacant since 2001–2004, with approved plans for eight homes. Drymen's Salmon Leap (0.25 ha), previously a tourism site, is derelict with no planning updates. In Arrochar, the Former Torpedo Range (3.61 ha), previously used for defence, has remained derelict since 2001–2004 though a planning application submitted in 2023 for a tourism led development is pending a decision. In Tarbet, both the Tourist Information Centre site (0.16 ha) and the Former Harvey's Garage site (0.42 ha) have been derelict since the early 2000s, with no updates. Lastly, in Balloch, Woodbank (0.81 ha), a former residential housing site vacant since 1981–1985, was part of a wider site that was included in a planning application for a tourism led development that was refused Planning Permission in September 2024. This decision has been appealed to Scottish Ministers and the outcome of this appeal is awaited.

There does not appear to be a pattern to the distribution of vacant and derelict sites across the National Park as they are spread across the National Park within settlements or close to their boundary and across all four local authority areas.

The SVDLS requires respondents to rate the 'development potential' of sites, which captures the likelihood of them coming back into productive use and how soon this may be. Of the 8 undeveloped sites 4 are deemed to be developable short term, 3 are deemed to be developable medium term and 1 is deemed to have an undetermined time scale for development

The National Park undertook a Vacant and Derelict Land Audit in 2018 Vacant-and-Derelict-land-audit-2018-for-Web_-V0.pdf and the most recent 2024 return to the Vacant and Derelict Land Survey shows very little change in these sites with all remaining undeveloped. This highlights a key area of focus for the National Park and the next iteration of the Local Development Plan and work should be completed which develops mechanisms for unlocking these development sites.

Buildings at Risk Register

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) maintains a list of important buildings that are at risk in Scotland – The Buildings at Risk Register (BARR). The buildings included on this list are usually listed buildings or buildings within Conservation Areas and may be at risk due to

them being structurally unsound, long-term vacant or damaged by fire. The current BARR has 50 buildings registered as 'at risk' within the National Park.

The buildings at risk are within the National Park are located across the authority with the majority being located in rural setting (52%) and rural settlements (36%). The locations of the buildings at risk across the National Park have been mapped (figure 1 in the appendix) and analysis has identified three hotspots:

- Drymen (particularly surrounding Buchanan Castle)
- Callander
- Kilmun /Blairmore.

The BARR includes details of each of the buildings at risk and these have been totalled to provide an overview of the threat to the historic environment across the area. The compiled numbers are shown in the tables below:

Location Type		
Category	Number	Percentage
Rural	26	52%
Rural Settlement	18	36%
Small Town	5	10%
Remote	1	2%

Category of Risk		
Category	Number	Percentage
Low	10	20%
Moderate	16	32%
High	20	40%
Critical	4	8%

Condition		
Category	Number	Percentage
Ruinous	7	14%
Very Poor	11	22%
Poor	19	38%
Fair	12	24%
Good	1	2%

National Planning Framework Data Atlas

As part of the preparation of NPF4, the Scottish Government released a National Planning Framework Data Atlas which holds key areas of data at both a national and local level. This resource has been beneficial to the development of this Topic Paper.

The map developed illustrates the proximity to derelict sites (2018). As evidenced, the majority of the population within the National Park does not live within 500 meters of Vacant and Derelict land, however there are some areas of The Park, most notably the north and south which have a higher percentage of people living in close proximity to a derelict site. It is widely understood that living within close proximity to vacant and derelict land can have negative health implications and therefore the vacant and derelict land within these areas should be a focus for development.

Contaminated Land and other hazards

There are no formally identified contaminated land sites in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority. SEPA holds a database of sites which have been identified as having the potential to be contaminated due to previous uses.

Radon Gas

Radon is a naturally occurring, radioactive, colourless and odourless gas that is formed where uranium and radium are present in our underlying geology. Where this gas occurs under a dwelling, the external walls contain it and the containment of radon can build up inside the dwelling over the long-term posing a risk to health.

Radon produces a radioactive dust in the air we breathe. The dust is trapped in our airways and emits radiation that damages the inside of our lungs. This damage, like the damage caused by smoking, increases our risk of lung cancer.

Within the National Park there are small areas where the underlying geology may result in higher concentrations of naturally occurring radon gas, these areas primarily on the boundary of The Park, particularly the North and South. The UK Health and Security Agency produce a UK radon map which shows pockets of land where there is the potential for homes to have levels at or above the UK action level. Within these areas appropriate buildings regulations must be followed. Guidance also suggests that the same measures are established within a 50m buffer of these areas to account for uncertain geological boundaries.

Major Accident Hazard establishments and / or pipelines

Evidence Reports are required to consider any additional, recently granted Hazardous Substances Consents and any expansion plans for new or existing sites, of businesses / operators using hazardous substances. There are no premises within the National Park which meet the HSE threshold for the Major Control of Accident Hazard Regulations.

The Finnart High Pressure Pipeline crosses through the southern part of the National Park from east to west and requires to be accounted for in any development proposals sited within the identified INEOS consultation buffer zones. The future of this pipeline remains uncertain, and as such, it may not need to be considered in future planning decisions.

Policy 12 – Zero Waste

This section of the paper provides an overview on the policy subject of zero waste. This topic paper looks at the issues of zero waste and looks at the key drivers for change that will minimise waste and adapt encourage, promote and facilitate development that is consistent with the waste hierarchy. This section provides an overview of the relevant national/local guidance that impacts on the new Local Development Plan. It also provides a summary of the current waste evidence base and explains how it will be used to shape any forthcoming policy.

National Context

This section details the National policy which will inform the policy position of the National Park in the new Local Development Plan.

Scotland's Zero Waste Plan

Scotland's Zero Waste Plan, published by the Scottish Government in June 2010 outlines a strategic approach to waste management, aiming to reduce waste, increase recycling, and promote resource efficiency. The overarching aim is for Scotland to become a zero-waste society by 2025, with targets of recycling 70% of all waste and sending only 5% of waste to landfill. The plan emphasises waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and recovery of materials. The goal is not to eliminate waste completely but to minimise it and manage resources effectively. The plan aligns with Scotland's Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, which sets targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 42% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. The shift to zero waste will reduce Scotland's reliance on new primary resources and help combat climate change by reducing emissions from waste. Additionally, Scotland is targeting a 33% reduction in food waste by 2025. These targets align with the country's broader climate action goals, aiming to transition towards a circular economy and contribute to Scotland's net-zero emissions ambitions.

Making Things Last: A Circular Economy Strategy for Scotland (2016)

Making Things Last: A Circular Economy Strategy for Scotland outlines Scotland's commitment to transitioning towards a more sustainable, resource-efficient economy. The strategy highlights the environmental, economic, and social benefits of adopting a circular economy, emphasising the need to reduce waste, extend product lifespans, and improve recycling. It aligns with Scotland's Zero Waste Plan and Safeguarding Scotland's Resources policies, setting ambitious targets to cut carbon emissions, reduce food waste by 33% by 2025, and promote the reuse and remanufacturing industries.

The strategy prioritises four key sectors: food and drink, manufacturing, construction and the built environment, and energy infrastructure. It proposes measures such as designing products for longer lifespans, supporting second-hand markets, enhancing repair services, and expanding recycling infrastructure. The plan also calls for greater producer responsibility, ensuring manufacturers account for the environmental impact of their products throughout their lifecycle.

Scotland aims to position itself as a global leader in circular economy practices, integrating sustainability into economic development, job creation, and environmental protection. By embedding circular economy principles into business models, public services, and everyday life, the strategy aspires to create a more resilient, low-carbon, and resource-efficient future.

Stop, Sort, Burn, Bury? – Independent Review of the Role of Incineration in the Waste Hierarchy in Scotland

The report titled - *Stop, Sort, Burn, Bury? Independent Review of the Role of Incineration in the Waste Hierarchy in Scotland* - was published in April 2022.

The report evaluates the role of incineration in Scotland's waste management system and its alignment with national carbon reduction targets. The review, led by Dr. Colin Church, focuses on residual waste management, examining how Scotland can transition toward a circular economy while balancing environmental, economic, and social impacts.

The review found that there will likely be a capacity gap in managing residual waste by 2025, primarily due to the upcoming ban on biodegradable municipal waste (BMW) in landfills. However, if Scotland meets its recycling and waste reduction targets, this gap could be minimised or eliminated. To avoid overcapacity in the future, the report recommends that Scotland limits new incineration infrastructure by halting further planning permissions for incinerators, unless balanced by the closure of older facilities (Recommendation 4). This is critical as too much incineration capacity could discourage recycling and waste reduction efforts.

The report highlights concerns that a reliance on incineration could act as a constraint on greater waste prevention and recycling, particularly as incineration produces carbon dioxide, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions. The review confirms that while modern incinerators are less harmful than landfills, they still have environmental impacts, particularly on climate change, and should only be part of a transitional strategy towards reducing waste and increasing recycling.

The report emphasises the need for separate reporting of greenhouse gas emissions from incineration (Recommendation 12). Furthermore, the Scottish Government is urged to explore technologies such as Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and carbon capture to reduce emissions from existing incinerators (Recommendation 14).

The review underlines the importance of careful planning and decision-making to avoid lock-in effects that could hinder recycling and circular economy goals. It specifically recommends that no new planning permissions for incinerators be granted unless there is a corresponding closure of existing capacity. Additionally, the report calls for incorporating these strategies into Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) to ensure future developments align with the country's broader environmental and waste management goals. Community engagement is another critical aspect highlighted in the planning process. Effective and authentic engagement with local communities is vital to the successful planning and operation of waste treatment facilities (Recommendation 8).

Local Authority Waste Management Plans

The National Park Authority is not directly responsible for waste management within its boundary and instead this responsibility lies with the four Local Authorities which make up the National Park. In this section each of the Local Authorities waste management strategies has been summarised as the National Park will need to take these into account when developing any waste management policies within the new Local Development Plan. Some data has also been provided within this section on each of the four local authorities waste statistics.

Stirling Council 10 Year Waste Strategy 2020 – 2030

The 10-Year Strategy for Thriving Stirling (2020-2030) includes a strong focus on zero waste and waste management as part of its broader commitment to achieving Carbon Net Zero and tackling the climate emergency. Stirling Council has declared a Climate & Ecological Emergency and is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, addressing waste regulation, and improving recycling and waste prevention.

The strategy recognises that achieving zero waste requires a shift in how Stirling handles waste disposal and resource management. It highlights the need for:

- Improved recycling infrastructure to encourage responsible waste disposal.

- Better waste management regulations to reduce landfill dependency.

- A streamlined special uplift system that enhances waste collection efficiency, reducing unnecessary delays and environmental impact.

- Community engagement initiatives to promote responsible waste disposal and increased public participation in waste reduction programs.

The strategy underscores the importance of collaboration between government, businesses, and communities to implement effective waste management and emission reduction policies.

<u>Argyll and Bute Waste Strategy</u>

The Argyll and Bute Waste Strategy outlines the local authority's plans and approaches to waste management, aiming to align with Scottish Government policies and promote sustainable waste reduction, reuse, and recycling practices. It emphasises compliance with upcoming legislative changes, such as the ban on Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) in landfills and other national waste reduction goals.
The Local Authority's overarching aim is to promote waste reduction, reuse, and recycling through public education, clear guidelines, and support for local reuse initiatives.

The strategy is tailored to different regions within Argyll and Bute, including the islands and mainland areas. Waste from islands like Tiree, Islay, and Mull is managed locally through Council-operated landfill sites, while other areas have private contracts for waste disposal.
There are several changes to waste policy outlined in the document:

- By 2021, the council must stop sending biodegradable waste (food, garden waste, paper) to landfills. This will require a transition to alternative waste disposal methods, potentially involving increased costs.
- In 2026, the council's contract with Renewi will end, prompting a need to explore new waste disposal models, either in-house or outsourced.
- The Scottish Government's upcoming Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drink containers will affect recycling streams by diverting certain materials away from kerbside collections.

The document outlines two key challenges in relation to waste management. The first is geographic isolation and limited infrastructure, which pose unique challenges to waste management in Argyll and Bute. Finance is also an issue for waste management as landfill tax is a significant cost, amounting to around 75% of total disposal costs. Reducing landfill use is key to saving money and reducing environmental impact.

The Argyll and Bute Waste Strategy briefly mentions the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. It highlights that the waste from the Helensburgh and Lomond area, which is within the boundaries of the national park, is collected and disposed of at third-party private sites outside Argyll and Bute.

No major waste disposal facilities exist within The Park area, and waste management is carried out in accordance with the broader regional waste strategy. The Park, being part of a more populated area, follows the collection model that includes residual waste, co-mingled recyclables, food waste, and glass collections.

Perth and Kinross Waste Management Plan 2010-2025

The Perth & Kinross Council Waste Management Plan (2010-2025) provides strategic direction for managing waste in alignment with Scotland's Zero Waste Plan. Its key goals are to reduce landfill use, increase recycling, and promote sustainable waste practices while addressing local challenges.
The plan follows the waste hierarchy: prevention, reuse, recycling, and disposal and it aligns with Scotland's Zero Waste Plan, aiming for 70% recycling by 2025 and less than 5% waste going to landfill by 2025. The plan includes initiatives to prevent waste at the source through local campaigns, community projects, and business support for waste minimisation.

The Council acknowledges the need for flexibility in waste management to adapt to changes in waste composition and national regulations. The plan emphasises public engagement through national and local waste awareness campaigns. Community involvement and partnerships with local charities are also key components.

Although primarily focused on municipal waste, the plan also touches on managing commercial and industrial waste in line with Scotland's broader targets for commercial and industrial waste recycling.

The waste management plan supports integrating waste facilities into local development plans to ensure adequate infrastructure for recycling and waste treatment. The council will collaborate with planning authorities to identify land suitable for waste facilities as part of broader strategic development efforts.

West Dunbartonshire Council Waste Strategy 2023 - 2028

The West Dunbartonshire Council Waste Strategy (2023-2028) outlines the Council's short and long-term plans to manage waste, aligning with Scotland's climate and zero-waste goals.

The waste service is responsible for 47% of the council's carbon footprint. The strategy details ways to reduce this by improving waste prevention, encouraging reuse, and increasing recycling efforts. The council aims to achieve zero waste to landfill by 2025, which aligns with Scottish Government targets. It outlines plans to increase recycling services and reduce the amount of residual waste through better resource recovery.

The document outlines the council's strategic objectives which are included below:

- Transition towards a circular economy by maximising the reuse of materials and reducing landfill use.
- Provide a cost-effective and compliant waste service that meets national regulations, including the 2025 ban on biodegradable waste in landfills.
- Ensure that the service is customer-focused, with responsive services that meet household needs.

The document focuses on two key enablers which will help the local authority meet its recycling targets. The first is investing in infrastructure improvements, such as the development of a Recycling Resource and Reuse Centre (RRRC) to manage and process waste locally. The second is to ensure there is a strong emphasis on community engagement, aiming to drive behavioural change toward waste reduction and recycling.

There is no specific mention on Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park within the document.

SEPA Waste Data

Across the four authorities that make up Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park - West Dunbartonshire, Stirling, Argyll and Bute, and Perth and Kinross - the total waste generated in 2022 varied significantly. Across the entire local authority area, West Dunbartonshire, Stirling, and Argyll and Bute each recorded the lowest levels of waste generation, producing between 0 and 50,000 tonnes. In contrast, Perth and Kinross generated a significantly higher amount, falling within the 50,000 to 100,000 tonnes range.

Recycling rates across these areas also differed. West Dunbartonshire had the lowest household recycling rate at 30-40%. Argyll and Bute and Perth and Kinross achieved rates of 40-50%, while Stirling had the highest rate at 50-60%, reflecting stronger recycling efforts in this region.

In terms of waste composition, Argyll and Bute's waste was primarily made up of household waste (16,630 tonnes) and vegetal waste (12,881 tonnes). Similarly, in Perth and Kinross, the largest contributors were household waste (23,335 tonnes), wood waste (22,228

tonnes), and vegetal waste (20,661 tonnes). Stirling's waste was also dominated by household waste, amounting to 21,308 tonnes. West Dunbartonshire followed a similar pattern, with household waste comprising the largest share at 24,762 tonnes.

The total business waste generated by these areas was 61,826 tonnes in Argyll and Bute, 121,551 tonnes in Perth and Kinross, 45,723 tonnes in Stirling, and 40,580 tonnes in West Dunbartonshire. These figures highlight the variation in waste generation and recycling practices across the National Park's council areas.

Landfill Sites

There are no landfill sites within the National Park boundary but each of the Local Authorities have a number of landfill sites. As of the latest data, Argyll and Bute has 19 landfill sites, with a total of 26,908 tonnes of waste landfilled and a remaining capacity of 205,836 tonnes.

Perth and Kinross and Stirling have 12 and 4 landfill sites, respectively, but no details on waste landfilled or remaining capacity are available. West Dunbartonshire operates 6 landfill sites, with 128,810 tonnes of waste landfilled and a significantly larger remaining capacity of 2,063,976 tonnes.

National Park Context

While the National Park Authority does not have a direct responsibility for waste management, the current Local development plan sets out a policy position. This section details the National Park's specific context.

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Waste Management Facilities

There are 7 local authority household recycling locations which vary in terms of what materials can be recycled. All are located within car parks and the distribution of them is focused on the larger settlements– Arrochar, Callander, Luss etc.

There are also three more general waste disposal areas in the east of The Park and the locations of these corresponds to the locations of the recycling facilities.

There is one larger scale recycling centre which is managed by Stirling Council and it is located in Callander. The other areas of The Park are served by recycling centres which are not within The Park boundary but are in relatively close proximity.

Policy 15 – Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods

National Context

The concept of local living was identified as one of the overarching spatial principles in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) . Policy 15 'Local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods' of NPF4 and the supporting draft Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods - planning guidance (April 2023) sets out the policy context for considering the Local Living concept and how this links with the Scottish Governments Place Standard Tool. Below is a summary of the policy context which will inform the National Park's position on Local Living and 20 minute neighbourhoods in a rural context.

Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Local Living and 20 minute Neighbourhoods

Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods (April 2024) provides detailed guidance on implementing the concept of 20-minute neighbourhoods in Scotland. This concept is central to NPF4 and aims to create communities where people can meet most of their daily needs within a 20-minute walk or cycle from their homes. The guidance supports local authorities, communities, and developers in planning and designing these neighbourhoods.

The guidance is rooted in NPF4's emphasis on climate action, reducing inequalities, and enhancing health and well-being. It promotes local living as a key spatial principle and provides detailed advice for planning authorities and communities.

Place and Wellbeing Outcomes – Improvement Service

The National Place and Wellbeing Outcomes provide a focus for where place impacts on the wellbeing of people and planet. The Outcomes provide a common set of evidenced features that make every place – the characteristics of a place that allow those who live, learn, work, and relax there to thrive. They promote equitable outcomes for different population groups and contribute to both greater climate resilience and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. They are also key features for delivering 20-minute neighbourhood ambitions. The Outcomes are detailed in the source material noted above and are set out in 13 themes as summarised below. The Outcome themes are interlinked – interventions in one Outcome have a knock-on impact on achieving the other Outcomes. Thus, a place-based approach is the basis for their delivery. A place-based approach should consider the physical, economic, and social elements that make up a place collaboratively.

Living Well Locally – 20 Minute Communities in the Highlands and Islands

The "*20 Minute Communities in the Highlands and Islands*" report was published in June 2022 by HITRANS and Sustrans and explores how the 20-Minute Neighbourhood concept could be adapted to the rural and island contexts of Scotland's Highlands and Islands. The goal is to create communities where essential services and facilities are accessible within a 20-minute walk, cycle, or public transport journey, thereby reducing reliance on cars, promoting sustainability, and improving wellbeing.

This model promotes living well locally by ensuring that residents can access their daily needs, such as work, education, healthcare, and social activities, within a short distance of their homes. Originally applied in urban settings, the challenge is to adapt it for rural areas. There are different challenges within rural areas compared to urban localities. These challenges include:

- Geographic Dispersal: Many rural and island communities are too spread out for walking or cycling to be practical for all daily needs.

- Infrastructure: Limited public transport and poor road and path conditions make sustainable transport options challenging.
- Service Accessibility: Lower population density makes it difficult to sustain services like shops, schools, and healthcare within close proximity.

The report suggests broadening the definition of sustainable travel to include public transport and electric vehicles and treating the 20-minute time frame as a flexible target rather than a strict rule. It also suggests re-branding the concept as "20-Minute Communities" to better reflect rural realities.

The report outlines key features that rural 20-Minute Communities should include, such as access to healthcare, schools, jobs, digital connectivity, public transport, and social hubs. It highlights examples of community-led initiatives that are already addressing some of these needs. In summary, this report examines how to tailor the 20-Minute Neighbourhood concept for the unique conditions of Scotland's Highlands and Islands, aiming to improve sustainability, reduce carbon emissions, and enhance the quality of life for residents in rural areas.

It is considered this report is relevant for the National Park Authorities approach to the 20-minute neighbourhood concept.

ClimateXChange – 20 Minute Neighbourhoods in a Scottish Context

20 Minute Neighbourhoods in a Scottish Context explores the applicability of the 20-Minute Neighbourhood concept in Scotland, with a focus on how this urban planning model can be adapted for different settlement types, including urban, rural, and remote areas. 20-Minute

Neighbourhoods aim to create places where people can access most of their daily needs within a 20-minute walk or cycle from their homes. This includes essential services like shops, schools, healthcare, and green spaces.

The report found that many areas in Scotland, both urban and rural, have the necessary infrastructure to support the 20-Minute Neighbourhood model. However, they may not yet meet the quality standards or function effectively as 20-minute neighbourhoods due to barriers such as poor infrastructure and transport. The report detailed the challenges of implementing the 20-minute neighbourhood approach, for example the geographic spread of rural communities, existing inequalities, and varying levels of infrastructure quality across different regions.

The report presents eight recommendations for making 20-Minute Neighbourhoods a reality in Scotland. These recommendations are designed to support the development of sustainable, accessible communities that prioritise walking, cycling, and public transport. The recommendations are as follows:

- Use the development of NPF4 to streamline and align policies that support 20-minute neighbourhoods.
- Emphasise active travel and improve public transport options, particularly in rural and urban areas, to minimise the need for private vehicles.
- Provide clear definitions, frameworks, and funding mechanisms at the national level to ensure consistent implementation.
- Encourage local authorities to work with communities to tailor the 20-minute neighbourhood model to their specific needs and promote active participation in decision-making.
- Further evaluate demonstration areas with a variety of neighbourhood types, including diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, to refine the model and assess its impacts.
- Undertake research to better understand how far people are willing to walk and cycle to access essential services, and how visual factors influence their willingness to do so.
- Establish a detailed national and local baseline to track the progress of 20-minute neighbourhoods and support planning efforts.
- Investigate how well the Place Principle is being applied by local authorities, identify challenges, and propose solutions to overcome barriers

Overall, the report emphasises the importance of community participation, flexible approaches, and aligning the concept with broader policy goals like sustainability, health, and wellbeing.

National Park Context

This section of the paper details the specific context of the National Park. It includes a mixture of policy and spatial data.

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Settlements

There are 20 settlements within the National Park. A map of these is included as figure 2 in the appendix.

Aberfoyle – as a community mobility hub 2024

The Aberfoyle Mobility Hub Report (2024), produced by Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Countryside Trust, explores the potential of Aberfoyle to function as a rural community mobility hub. It builds a case for more integrated, sustainable, and low-carbon transport options to better serve both residents and visitors. The report highlights Aberfoyle's strategic location as a gateway to the National Park, yet identifies significant shortcomings in transport connectivity, signage, and infrastructure.

The report applies CoMoUK's mobility hub criteria to assess Aberfoyle across six key areas: sustainable mode options, visibility and accessibility, ease of switching between transport modes, safety, practical facilities, and visual/community appeal. While Aberfoyle shows promise in areas such as cycle parking, basic amenities, and strategic location, it falls short in integration, signage, inclusive access, and the co-location of transport options.

The report calls for a system-wide, place-based approach aligned with national climate and transport policies. Recommendations include improving shared transport (e.g., shuttle buses, bike share), enhancing signage and digital information, improving disabled and active travel access, and promoting existing facilities. Community collaboration, particularly through the local Development Trust and National Park Authority, is emphasised as essential for success. Ultimately, with relatively modest investments and coordination, Aberfoyle could become an exemplar for rural sustainable mobility, supporting climate goals, reducing car dependency, and enhancing both local life and tourism experience.

Arrochar and Tarbet – as a community mobility hub 2024

The Arrochar Mobility Hub Report (2024), prepared by the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs Countryside Trust, explores the potential for Arrochar, Tarbet, and Ardlui to operate collectively as a community mobility hub. Situated in a key gateway area within the National Park, these rural villages are uniquely placed to support sustainable and active travel, connecting visitors and residents to wider destinations. The report identifies the existing infrastructure - including a train station on the West Highland Line, bus services, cycle and walking routes, and waterbus links - but also highlights shortcomings in connectivity, signage, accessibility, and service integration.

The assessment used CoMo UK's community mobility hub criteria and found that although the area has many components of a mobility hub, improvements are required to meet accreditation standards. Key deficiencies include a lack of shared transport options, inconsistent signage and information, inadequate accessible infrastructure (e.g. poor disabled access to the station), limited cycle parking, and a disjointed presentation of practical services. The report advocates for a whole-systems approach to modal shift and behaviour change, aligned with national climate and active travel goals. It provides a series of practical, place-based recommendations including improving shared transport access (like bike and car hire), enhancing signage and digital connectivity, integrating wayfinding systems, upgrading accessibility and infrastructure, and better promotion of existing community services.

Overall, the report positions Arrochar and Tarbet as a strong candidate for a rural mobility hub pilot, with the potential to become a model for integrated, sustainable transport in remote gateway communities. Its successful implementation depends on collaborative planning among stakeholders, alignment with the National Park's goals, and a shared vision for reducing carbon emissions and improving local quality of life.

Callander – as a community mobility hub 2024

The Callander Mobility Hub Report explores how Callander, as a key gateway to the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, could function as a rural mobility hub, improving transport integration, accessibility, and community experience. Produced by the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Countryside Trust, the report evaluates existing infrastructure using CoMoUK's mobility hub accreditation criteria, alongside community consultation and walkability audits. While Callander has some sustainable transport elements - such as bus services, cycling routes, and shared bike hire - the town falls short in key areas like signage, wayfinding, accessibility, and the ease of switching between transport modes.

Station Road Car Park and Ancaster Square are key transport nodes, but the connections between them and to the wider active travel network are fragmented or unclear. Infrastructure such as cycle parking is often poorly located, signage is inconsistent, and access for disabled users is limited. Despite being well-positioned geographically and historically, Callander currently lacks the facilities and cohesive design to function as a full mobility hub.

The report outlines several recommendations, including improving shared transport awareness, enhancing signage and real-time travel information, addressing gaps in inclusive access, and increasing coordination between stakeholders. It advocates for a systems-based approach to tackle transport poverty and promote a just transition to low-carbon mobility. With targeted investment, community involvement, and a strategic focus, Callander could become an exemplary model for rural mobility, enhancing connectivity for both residents and visitors.

Drymen and the Villages of East Loch Lomond – Living Well Locally, Vision and Routemap

The Living Well Locally routemap outlines a community-driven plan for creating 20-minute villages in Drymen and the surrounding areas of East Loch Lomond. The concept adapts the urban 20-minute neighbourhood model to a rural context, aiming to help residents meet their daily needs within a 20-minute walk or cycle from their homes.

The project involved surveys, events, and conversations with over 120 residents, identifying key community priorities such as improved public transport, better walking and cycling routes, and enhanced community spaces. Residents prioritised maintaining the strong sense of identity and belonging in their villages, improving access to local amenities, and enhancing safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

The document outlines objectives across five themes: Movement, Spaces, Resources, Civic, and Stewardship. These include creating shared-use paths, improving public transport connections, developing community hubs, and ensuring sustainable housing and local amenities.

Key challenges include the dispersed nature of rural services, limited public transport, and the need for better infrastructure to support walking and cycling. Opportunities include reusing disused buildings, improving green spaces, and enhancing local economic opportunities.

The document recommends forming working groups, seeking funding, and engaging with stakeholders to implement the vision. Technical assessments and detailed planning are needed to address the specific needs of each village and ensure that the 20-minute neighbourhood concept is adapted effectively for rural settings.

The vision emphasises the potential for Drymen and East Loch Lomond to become more connected, sustainable communities. By improving local transport, housing, and amenities, the area can better meet residents' needs and contribute to Scotland's broader goals of reducing carbon emissions and enhancing quality of life.

Drymen Community Active Travel Plan (2021)

This report was produced by the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs Countryside Trust as part of the organisation's Active Travel Project – which aims to support and encourage local communities to walk and cycle more. Through Surveys and conversations with Drymen's community and consideration of key active travel stakeholder knowledge, the trust has established a set of recommendations and actions that can be used by the community to contribute to making Drymen cycling and walking friendly. These contents of the active travel plan are summarised following in relation to the enablement of Local Living for Drymen and the surrounding area.

- Recognises the importance of maximising the impact of key strategic links such as Lochs and Glens North (NCN7, EV1), the West Highland Way and the Rob Roy Way
- In the top five concerns raised by the community is issue of a lack of a coherent network that links key destinations, sometimes unclear signage or lack of signage was raised. Particularly focusing on issue of no safe connections to Balmaha or Croftamie.
- The survey also highlights the need for greater knowledge of routes, free maps and custom route planning for walking and cycling.
- Survey responses also highlighted the current difficulties in active travel to school, due to the area being busy with traffic and the lack of segregation or dedicated paths.
- While NCN7 runs directly through the town there is very little other good quality segregated infrastructure that connects the village to destinations with services, the school, visitor attractions and main transport interchanges such as Balloch.
- Pedestrian access to footways and safe active travel options along the A811 towards Croftamie are either poor or non-existent, similarly the footway, shared path towards Balmaha is in poor condition.

Priority Places for Food Index Version 2

The Priority Places for Food Index is a composite index formed of data compiled across seven different dimensions relating to food insecurity risk in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Its goal is to identify neighbourhoods that are most vulnerable to increases in the cost of living and which have a lack of accessibility to cheap, healthy, and sustainable sources of food.

The tool provides data on food priorities for the datazones within the National Park. A summary of the information obtained from this dataset showed that access and proximity to supermarket and retail facilities is a consistent challenge for communities across the National Park. While access to supermarket facilities is limited, there are very few social barriers to food access and there is a limited need for external support for families.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) measures deprivation across small areas (data zones) in Scotland based on factors such as income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime, and housing. For Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, the SIMD data is relevant as it can highlight disparities within different parts of The Park.

Although the National Park itself is not categorised as one of the most deprived areas in Scotland, certain data zones within or near The Park may show varying levels of deprivation, particularly in terms of access to services due to the rural nature of the area. Geographic

access to healthcare, education, and other essential services can be challenging in such remote areas, which is a key domain in the SIMD assessment.

The Scottish Living Locally Data Portal

The Scottish Government have produced the Living Locally Data Portal which is an interactive online map that shows for all residential locations in Scotland whether they have access to 12 living locally facilities, these are set out below. Data is provided at individual postcode level and aggregated to the proportion of residential locations that have access to each domain for all Scottish data-zones and local authorities. The data is not available for the whole of the National Park area but a summary of the detail has been provided below. The data was extracted from the portal in early 2024 for the following 12 identified facilities.

1. Healthy food retail
2. Public transport
3. High frequency public transport
4. Primary healthcare
5. Recreational resources
6. Primary school
7. Financial
8. Pharmacy
9. Accessible public open space
10. Social and Cultural
11. Eating establishments
12. Super-Fast Broadband

In _Callander and Trossachs – 05_, which includes the west end of town, Bridgend, and the southern portion of Callander, access to key local living services is generally good but varies across different sectors. Public transport coverage is universal (100%), allowing residents to travel within and beyond the area, but high-frequency public transport is unavailable (0%), limiting efficient connections to larger settlements. Access to primary healthcare is also absent (0%), requiring residents to travel elsewhere for medical services.

Other essential services have moderate to high accessibility, with healthy food retail (57%), financial services (57%), and pharmacies (50%) available to just over half of the population. Recreational resources (87%) and primary schools (77%) are more accessible, providing

support for families and active lifestyles. Additionally, accessible public open space, social and cultural venues, and eating establishments are all available to around 57% of residents, contributing to community engagement and well-being.

Superfast broadband coverage is high (98%), ensuring strong digital connectivity for remote work and online services. However, the lack of primary healthcare and high-frequency transport presents challenges, particularly for elderly residents and those needing frequent travel for medical needs. Addressing these gaps could enhance local living conditions and improve Callander's role as a well-connected service hub for the wider area.

In _Callander and Trossachs - 04,_ which covers the dense core of Callander town centre, residents have exceptional access to essential services, making it a well-equipped area for local living. Public transport availability is universal (100%), though high-frequency public transport remains unavailable (0%), limiting efficient travel to larger towns and cities. Healthy food retail, recreational resources, financial services, social and cultural facilities, eating establishments, accessible public open space, and super-fast broadband all have 100% accessibility, ensuring that residents benefit from a well-connected and vibrant town centre.

Primary education is highly accessible (92%), and pharmacies (96%) provide strong healthcare support. However, access to primary healthcare services is significantly limited (8%), requiring most residents to travel for medical appointments. While the town centre is rich in amenities, improving healthcare accessibility and high-frequency transport connections would enhance Callander's role as a regional service hub for both residents and surrounding communities.

In _Callander and Trossachs – 01_, covering the east end of the village (north), residents have strong access to essential services, but with some notable gaps. Public transport availability is universal (100%), ensuring good connectivity within the area, though high-frequency public transport remains absent (0%), potentially limiting efficient travel to larger urban centres. Financial services, pharmacy access, and super-fast broadband are fully accessible (100%), supporting digital connectivity and day-to-day financial and medical needs.

Healthy food retail (50%) and eating establishments (50%) are available to only half of the population, indicating some limitations in food access and dining options. Recreational resources (75%) and accessible public open space (92%) provide good opportunities for outdoor activities, contributing to well-being and community engagement. While primary healthcare is relatively accessible (75%), primary school access is limited (33%), which may require families to travel for education. Similarly, social and cultural amenities (33%) are not widely available in this part of the village.

Overall, residents benefit from strong connectivity, healthcare, and financial services, but improving access to high-frequency transport, education, and social facilities would further enhance local living conditions in this area.

In _Callander and Trossachs – 02_, covering the east end of the village (south), residents enjoy excellent access to essential services, though primary education is entirely absent (0%), meaning families must travel elsewhere for schooling. Public transport access is universal (100%), though the lack of high-frequency public transport (0%) limits efficient travel to larger towns and cities. Primary healthcare, financial services, pharmacies, recreational resources, and accessible public open space all have 100% coverage, ensuring strong healthcare support and a well-connected community environment.

Healthy food retail (65%) and eating establishments (65%) are available to most residents, providing relatively good access to food and dining options. Super-fast broadband (99%) ensures strong digital connectivity, supporting remote work and online services. However, social and cultural facilities are limited (35%), suggesting fewer community engagement opportunities compared to other parts of Callander.

Overall, this area is well-equipped for local living, but the lack of a primary school and high-frequency transport connections could pose challenges for families and those commuting to larger urban centres. Improving education facilities and transport links would further strengthen the area's self-sufficiency and connectivity.

In _Callander and Trossachs – 03_, which covers the rural areas surrounding Callander, access to essential services is significantly limited, making local living more challenging for residents. Public transport availability is low (62%), and high-frequency public transport is completely absent (0%), restricting efficient travel to larger service hubs. Access to primary healthcare (22%) and pharmacies (24%) is also very limited, requiring residents to travel long distances for medical services.

Access to healthy food retail (19%) and eating establishments (32%) is minimal, meaning most residents must rely on travel to Callander or other nearby towns for groceries and dining. Recreational resources (24%), social and cultural facilities (24%), and financial services (32%) are also scarce, offering few local amenities for residents. No primary schools are available in the area (0%), meaning families with children must commute to other towns for education.

Additionally, accessible public open space (35%) is relatively low for a rural area, and super-fast broadband coverage is limited (40%), potentially impacting remote working and digital access. Overall, this area faces significant barriers to local living, with poor access to education, healthcare, retail, and public transport. Addressing these challenges through improved infrastructure, transport links, and service provisions would be crucial for enhancing quality of life in this rural community.

In _Highland – 03 (Balquhidder, Lochearnhead and Strathyre),_ access to essential services is extremely limited, making local living difficult for residents. Healthy food retail (0%) and pharmacy access (0%) are entirely unavailable, requiring people to travel elsewhere for groceries and medical needs. Primary healthcare services are also absent (0%), which poses significant challenges for those needing regular medical

care. Public transport access is moderate (59%), but high-frequency public transport is only available to 26% of residents, limiting convenient travel to larger service hubs.

Recreational and cultural amenities are sparse, with only 26% of residents having access to recreational resources and social or cultural facilities. Primary school access is very low (15%), meaning most families must travel to other areas for education. Financial services (18%) and eating establishments (32%) are also limited, reducing local economic activity and convenience.

Despite these shortcomings, accessible public open space (44%) provides some opportunities for outdoor activities, and super-fast broadband coverage (57%) ensures a moderate level of digital connectivity. However, the overall lack of key services such as food retail, healthcare, and transport connectivity presents significant barriers to self-sufficient living, requiring improvements in infrastructure and service accessibility to enhance the quality of life in this area.

In *Comrie, Gilmerton, and St Fillans (St Fillans and surrounding area) – 05*, access to essential services is moderate to good, with strong public transport coverage (83%), though high-frequency public transport remains low (17%), limiting convenient travel options to larger towns. Recreational resources (78%), social and cultural facilities (80%), and accessible public open space (71%) are widely available, providing opportunities for outdoor activities and community engagement.

However, key challenges remain, particularly the complete lack of healthy food retail (0%), meaning residents must travel outside the area for groceries. Primary healthcare access is very low (10%), making it difficult for residents to receive medical services nearby. Pharmacy and financial services (both 51%) are available to about half of the population, while primary school access (54%) ensures that education is more accessible than in many other rural areas.

Additionally, eating establishments (56%) provide moderate dining options, and super-fast broadband (75%) ensures strong digital connectivity for remote work and online services. While this area benefits from good transport links and a strong sense of community, improving access to food retail, healthcare, and high-frequency transport would enhance local living and self-sufficiency for residents.

In *Balfron and Drymen – 01 (Drymen Village),* residents benefit from comprehensive access to essential services, making it a well-equipped area for local living. Public transport availability is universal (100%), allowing convenient travel within and beyond the village, though high-frequency public transport remains unavailable (0%), which may limit efficient connections to larger towns. Primary healthcare, financial services, pharmacy access, recreational resources, primary school facilities, and accessible public open space all have 100% coverage, ensuring strong community infrastructure and support for residents.

However, there is no access to healthy food retail (0%), meaning residents must travel outside the village for groceries. Similarly, eating establishments are completely absent (0%), reducing local dining options and social opportunities. Despite this, social and cultural facilities are available to 61% of the population, helping to foster community engagement. Additionally, super-fast broadband coverage is excellent (100%), supporting remote work and digital accessibility.

Overall, Drymen Village provides strong foundational services, but the lack of food retail and dining options, combined with limited transport efficiency, presents challenges for local living. Enhancing food accessibility and high-frequency transport connections would further strengthen its self-sufficiency and role as a service hub for the surrounding area.

In _Balfron and Drymen – 02,_ which includes a small portion of Drymen and a large rural area to the east, access to essential services is limited, making local living more challenging. Public transport availability is low (37%), and there is no access to high-frequency public transport (0%), restricting convenient travel to larger service hubs. Primary healthcare (27%), pharmacies (27%), and financial services (27%) are only available to a small portion of residents, requiring most people to travel elsewhere for medical and financial needs.

Recreational resources (30%) and accessible public open space (30%) are also limited, offering fewer opportunities for outdoor activities and community engagement. Primary school access (23%) is scarce, meaning families must travel for education. Healthy food retail is completely absent (0%), and eating establishments (7%) are nearly non-existent, making it difficult for residents to access groceries and dining options locally.

On a positive note, super-fast broadband coverage is relatively strong (68%), enabling some level of digital connectivity for remote work and online services. However, overall, the area faces significant barriers to self-sufficiency, with poor transport links, lack of key services, and limited access to food and education. Expanding public transport, improving access to essential services, and increasing food retail options would be crucial steps in enhancing local living conditions in this rural community.

In _Lomond – 06 (Gartocharn and surrounding area),_ access to essential services is limited, presenting challenges for local living. Public transport availability is moderate (53%), but there is no access to high-frequency public transport (0%), restricting efficient travel to larger towns and service hubs. Primary healthcare and pharmacy services are completely absent (0%), meaning residents must travel outside the area for medical needs.

Healthy food retail is also unavailable (0%), making grocery shopping difficult without traveling to nearby towns. Access to financial services (42%), social and cultural facilities (47%), and eating establishments (42%) is moderate, providing some local amenities, though coverage

remains low compared to more urban areas. Recreational resources (42%) and accessible public open space (42%) ensure some outdoor activity opportunities, though they are not widely available.

Primary school access (37%) is available to some residents, but education options remain limited. Additionally, super-fast broadband coverage is low (45%), which may hinder remote working and digital accessibility. Overall, this area faces significant challenges in accessing food, healthcare, education, and reliable transport, making it difficult for residents to maintain a fully self-sufficient lifestyle. Improvements in transport, broadband, and local service availability would greatly enhance quality of life and connectivity in the region.

In *Blane Valley – 01 (Balmaha and Buchanan Castle),* access to essential services is extremely limited, making local living difficult for residents. Public transport coverage is low (41%), and high-frequency public transport is nearly non-existent (6%), restricting convenient travel to larger service hubs. There is no access to primary healthcare (0%), pharmacies (0%), financial services (0%), or primary schools (0%), meaning residents must travel outside the area for medical, financial, and educational needs.

Healthy food retail (0%) and eating establishments (0%) are entirely absent, further limiting local food options and requiring travel for groceries and dining. Recreational resources (12%) and accessible public open space (6%) are also minimal, offering few outdoor activity opportunities despite the area's natural surroundings.

On a positive note, social and cultural facilities are available to 53% of residents, providing some level of community engagement. Super-fast broadband coverage (63%) is moderate, allowing for some digital connectivity. However, overall, this area faces significant challenges in accessing basic services, making daily life highly dependent on travel to other towns. Improvements in transport, local services, and food accessibility would be essential in enhancing self-sufficiency and quality of life for residents.

In *Cowal North – 04,* which includes Arrochar, Tarbet, Succoth, and the surrounding rural areas, access to key local living services varies significantly. Public transport is available to 77% of residents, but high-frequency transport options are entirely absent, limiting convenient travel to larger service hubs. Access to primary healthcare is low, with only 28% of residents having a facility within a 20-minute walk, and pharmacies are completely unavailable in the area. Healthy food retail is also non-existent, meaning residents must travel outside the community for groceries.

Service availability remains limited across other key sectors, with only 17% of residents having access to a primary school, while financial services, eating establishments, and social/cultural facilities are available to just 28-46% of the population. Recreational resources (54%) and accessible public open space (63%) are more widely available, reflecting the area's natural landscape and outdoor opportunities. Superfast broadband coverage is moderate at 56%, which may pose connectivity challenges for remote working and digital access.

Overall, the lack of essential services such as food retail, pharmacies, and educational facilities makes daily life more challenging for residents, increasing their reliance on travel to larger towns for basic needs. Improvements in transport connectivity, local amenities, and digital infrastructure could help enhance local living and reduce service gaps in the community.

Conclusions

The dataset indicates that central Callander provides strong local living services, with access to most essential amenities except for high-frequency public transport. Although public transport coverage is universal, the lack of efficient connections to larger settlements like Stirling and Glasgow limits accessibility for residents. Additionally, weaker transport links between Callander and smaller surrounding communities hinder these areas from utilising Callander's services effectively.

In the rural areas surrounding Callander, access to key services is significantly lower, with the particular challenge being access to primary education facilities. Additionally, only 62% of residents have access to public transport, making travel for essential services difficult. The wider BLS area (Balquhidder, Lochearnhead, Strathyre) also faces major service gaps, with less than 50% accessibility to essential services, apart from public transport (59%) and superfast broadband (57%). There is no access to healthy food retail or pharmacies, and poor transport connectivity further restricts access to services in Callander.

In St Fillans and its surrounding area, access to services is better than in other rural settlements, with more than half of residents having access to essential services. However, primary healthcare remains a concern, with only 9% of residents having a facility within a 20-minute walk. Public transport is relatively accessible (83%), but high-frequency transport remains low (17%), limiting mobility options.

Drymen is the best-equipped settlement for local living, offering most essential services and potentially serving as a hub for neighbouring communities. 100% of residents have access to public transport, allowing travel to other areas, but the absence of high-frequency transport suggests inefficiencies in the network. Additionally, there is no access to healthy food retail or eating establishments, highlighting a lack of diversity in food options.

Overall, while Callander and Drymen serve as key hubs, poor transport links and limited-service availability in surrounding areas create some barriers to local living. Addressing transport inefficiencies, improving food retail access, and expanding key services like healthcare would enhance self-sufficiency and quality of life across the region.

HITRANS 20 Minute Neighbourhoods Study (arcgis.com)

HITRANS developed a mapping tool for the Highlands and Islands area of Scotland to determine how 20 minute neighbourhoods concept could be applied in a rural setting. The study provides mapping for Argyll and Bute Local Authority and goes into detail about the level of service provision based on the census output areas.

Locations of water re-fill taps

Scottish Water has details of the water re-fill locations within The Park. A link to the map of these is included as figure 3 in the appendix and linked above. There are ten locations across The Park and most are concentrated around Loch Lomond. There are no locations within the Argyll and Bute local authority area of The Park.

Education Facilities in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park spans four local authorities, with education facilities both within and on the outskirts of The Park area playing a crucial role in serving local communities.

The Park has seven nurseries, with four additional facilities outside its boundary serving residents. Croftamie nursery has relocated to Drymen, and Crianlarich nursery is merging with Killin nursery. St. Fillan's residents rely on Comrie Primary School's nursery, 7.6km away.

Of the 18 primary schools serving The Park, 14 are within its boundary. Callander Primary is at capacity and will be relocated near McLaren High School. Six secondary schools serve The Park, with McLaren High School the only one within the boundary.

Within the National Park, ASN provision is available at Katrine House in McLaren High School and Trossachs House at Callander Primary School. Outside The Park, ASN is provided at Etive House (St Modan's High School), Parklands Primary School (Helensburgh), and Choices School (Jamestown). McLaren High and Parklands Primary are in good condition, Choices School is satisfactory, and Callander Primary is in poor condition, although a replacement school is under construction.

Three Roman Catholic schools near The Park serve residents: St. Kessog's Primary (Alexandria), St. Modan's High (Stirling), and Our Lady & St. Patrick's High (Dumbarton).

Within The Park, Scottish Agricultural College (Crianlarich) offers higher education. Nearby institutions include University of the Highlands & Islands (Helensburgh, Dunoon, Oban), University of Stirling, and Forth Valley College. Southern residents have access to University of the West of Scotland, Glasgow's universities, and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Education planning must consider both facilities within and outside The Park to meet local needs effectively.

The National Park Settlements

In preparation of integrating the local living principle into the upcoming Local Development Plan, officers within the National Park Authority have considered how potential sub-areas of The Park could work together to support local living. As previously mentioned the National Park Authority will likely take a rural approach to the Local Living principle and this could result in support for services being divided between different settlements but within one of the sub-areas shown in figure 4 in the appendix. A desk-based mapping exercise was undertaken to understand the services within each subarea and ascertain if there are any gaps.

This approach is still to be fully explored and more detailed mapping prepared but the output of this piece of work is explored below.

The work involved conducting a review of the services within each of our communities to ascertain which communities can fulfil the 20-minute neighbourhood concept. A detailed spreadsheet has been compiled and a summary of the services have been included below. The list below illustrates the range of services that have been considered as part of the review:

Health and Wellbeing:

- GP Surgery (health care services, health centre)
- Dentist
- Pharmacy
- Optician
- Sheltered accommodation and Care/Nursing Home

Retail Services:

- Post Office
- Public convenience
- Shop non food
- Food shop
- Library
- Bank

- Petrol Station

Education/Childcare:

- Child care/nursery
- Primary School
- Secondary School

Community:

- Indoor leisure (includes pools, football)

- Community hall/hub
- Places of Worship

The settlement data highlights variations in health, services, education, and community facilities across different areas. Callander and Drymen show the largest number of health and well-being facilities, while many areas, including Luss and Arden, Kilmaronock, and several smaller communities, have little to no recorded health provisions. In terms of retail services, Callander, Aberfoyle, and Balloch offer the highest levels, while smaller villages like Stronachlachar, Kinlochard, and Ardlui have minimal or no retail service availability. Education support is most prominent in Callander, Balloch, Kilmaronock, and Drymen, though many areas have no recorded educational provisions. Community facilities are greatest in Drymen, Aberfoyle, Brig O' Turk, and Killin, with some areas like Ardlui, Tarbet, and Stronachlachar showing little or no community activity. Overall, larger towns tend to have better access to health, services, and education, while smaller and more remote villages have fewer resources and limited facilities for communities.

Cowal - Lochgoilhead, Ardentinny, Blairmore, Strone, Kilmun

This sub-area lacks a central hub community but has a strong history of local collaboration. The region faces shared challenges, including population decline, housing pressure, climate-related risks (flooding and land slips), and access to aquaculture. The landscape is characterised by woodlands, rugged uplands, glens, and coastal marine areas, contributing to a collective sense of place rooted in its 19th-century tourist history with Clyde Steamers.

Lochgoil is geographically isolated, with residents traveling both north (Arrochar/Tarbet) and south (Dunoon/Helensburgh) for essential services, raising the question of whether it should be grouped with West Loch Lomond. Essential local facilities include two primary schools (Lochgoil and Strone), village halls (except in Carrick Castle), medical centres in Blairmore and Lochgoilhead, and grocery shops in all but Ardentinny and Carrick Castle. The area is highly vulnerable to climate change, with major risks related to land slips along the A83, flooding, and rising sea levels.

The housing market is under pressure, with high prices, an ageing population, and a shortage of affordable housing due to the prevalence of second homes and short-term lets. The economy is driven by tourism, particularly caravan parks, but concerns remain over whether this type of development aligns with net zero goals. The Lochgoilhead community is exploring marine tourism as a new economic opportunity.

<u>West Loch Lomond - Luss, Arrochar, Tarbet, Succoth</u>

Arrochar and Tarbet offer potential as a regional service hub, particularly due to rail and water transport links, but currently lack sufficient services. Communities in the area share common challenges, including housing shortages, inadequate public transport, and a lack of opportunities for young people and families. The A82's dominance affects accessibility, while Arrochar and Tarbet also struggle with vacant and derelict sites, lacking a central village space. In contrast, Luss faces severe visitor pressure and an ageing population.

Efforts have been made to collaborate on tourism management, with Luss Estates and the National Park Sub-Destination Group working with landowners. The region has potential for peatland and woodland creation, aligning with climate resilience goals. A shared architectural style and Viking heritage contribute to a distinct local identity. The area relies on services in Helensburgh and Balloch, while Arrochar and Tarbet also have links to Cowal communities.

Essential local services include two primary schools, village halls in each community, and medical facilities in Arrochar (Luss residents travel to Balloch/Helensburgh for healthcare). There are grocery shops and play parks in each village, though the region faces coastal flooding risks, particularly in Arrochar. Active travel improvements are needed, especially between Arrochar and Tarbet, with opportunities for an A83 railway bridge upgrade.

Housing pressures persist, driven largely by tourism demands. Luss is looking to limit tourism and diversify its economy to attract young families, while Arrochar and Tarbet seek to capitalise on passing trade by developing more services beyond their current reliance on coach holiday hotels.

<u>East and South Loch Lomond – Drymen, Croftamie, Balmaha, Gartocharn</u>

Drymen has the greatest potential to serve as a local hub, with communities in the area sharing similar housing, transport, and tourism challenges. The landscape varies, with South Loch Lomond characterised by farmed lowlands and East Loch Lomond dominated by grazing land and opportunities for nature restoration. The area is well connected by woodland networks and Loch Lomond/River Endrick, with a distinct architectural identity featuring red sandstone buildings and views of the Highland Boundary Fault.

Public transport links to Glasgow and Stirling are limited, and active travel connections need improvement, particularly between Croftamie, Drymen, Gartocharn, and Balloch. Services are concentrated in Balloch, Balfron, Milngavie, and Glasgow, while essential local facilities include two primary schools, village halls in Drymen and Gartocharn, grocery shops in all communities, and play parks in each area. Medical facilities are lacking, with residents traveling to Alexandria or Balfron for healthcare.

Housing pressure is severe, with extremely high property prices driven by the area's commuter belt location and tourism market. Worker accommodation is particularly scarce in East Loch Lomond, affecting businesses.

The local economy relies on tourism, with Drymen catering to West Highland Way visitors through camping, glamping, and self-catering accommodations, while hotels across the area focus on high-end stays and wedding venues.

Strathfillan and Killin

While there is no dominant hub, these communities have a strong history of collaboration, particularly through the Wild Strathfillan project. The area faces population decline and poor public transport connections to Callander, limiting access to services. Killin is struggling with retail closures, while Tyndrum faces a worker accommodation shortage.

The region shares similar landscapes and historical identities, shaped by droving routes and railway travel. Residents rely on Callander for high schools and services, while Tyndrum and Crianlarich also connect west to Dalmally and Bridge of Orchy. Local services include primary schools (except in Tyndrum), village halls, grocery shops, play parks, cafés, and GP services in Killin. The area has strong active travel potential, with opportunities to connect Crainlarich, Tyndrum, and Killin.

There is growing community ownership, with Crainlarich and Tyndrum acquiring local shops and woodlands. However, housing pressure is severe, driven by second homes and short-term lets, contributing to population decline in Crainlarich and Tyndrum. The economy is tourism-focused, benefiting from the West Highland Way, outdoor recreation, and diverse accommodation options.

Callander, BLS, St Fillans, Trossachs

This sub-area is centred around Callander, but St Fillans looks to Comrie for services. The area faces housing pressure due to second homes and poor public transport links to Callander. Lochearnhead has several vacant sites, and deer management conflicts may hinder future collaboration.

The landscape is consistent across the area, featuring deer management, upland grazing, and woodland creation. A Victorian tourism heritage contributes to a shared identity. Callander functions as a local living hub, offering strong service connections to Stirling. However, housing is unaffordable, particularly in St Fillans and Balquhidder, with Lochearnhead and Strathyre providing more affordability.

The economy is reliant on tourism, but business closures linked to ageing populations and staff shortages are an issue. Active travel links are improving, with sections of a new connection between St Fillans and Comrie underway.

Strathard, Gartmore, Port of Menteith

These communities collaborate on visitor management but lack a central service hub. Public transport connectivity is poor, particularly links to Stirling, Balfron, and Buchlyvie. Aberfoyle faces housing and flooding pressures, while Gartmore has an active community that owns local assets.

Essential facilities include three primary schools, thriving village halls, and local play parks, but medical services are only available in Buchlyvie and Kippen. Active travel links need improvements, particularly between Aberfoyle, Kinlochard, and Gartmore.

The demand for affordable housing is high, particularly in Aberfoyle, where the population is both declining and ageing. The local economy is supported by tourism and small businesses, with community-led projects aiming to improve local services and infrastructure.

Local Living Mapping

High level mapping has been developed as part of the preparation of this Evidence Report. These maps have been developed for each of the six localities of the National Park and can be found in the Place Based papers which have been prepared to supplement the Evidence Report.

Policy 21 – Play, Recreation and Sport

This section provides an overview of the provision of sites for outdoor recreation. The assessment considers a range of facilities from sports pitches, parks and play spaces which are important centres for informal activities like walking and cycling. The Topic Paper summarises the findings of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA).

It should be noted that the National Park is a rural authority where the majority of residents have good access to the natural environment.

National Context

Play Strategy For Scotland – Our Vision

The Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision outlines the Scotland Government's approach to ensuring that play is a key element of childhood development. It emphasises the importance of play in the lives of children and young people, both for their personal growth and the wellbeing of society. The strategy advocates for play to be embedded across all environments - homes, schools, and communities.

Play is defined as a freely chosen, self-directed, and intrinsically motivated activity.

Scotland aims to be the best place for children to grow up, valuing play as a fundamental daily experience that enhances life. The goal is to provide opportunities for children to engage in play everywhere. The strategy aligns with Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recognises play as a right for all children. It advocates for action to ensure play is accessible across various settings, including for disadvantaged or disabled children.

The strategy promotes a supportive environment with trained professionals across sectors, including education and health, to encourage play. It also advocates for embracing risks in play, as managing challenges is crucial for children's growth and confidence.

The document concludes with a commitment to create an action plan (see following summary) that will detail the steps needed to achieve these play-related goals across Scotland.

Play Strategy for Scotland – Our Action Plan

The Play Strategy for Scotland: Action Plan sets out practical steps to achieve the vision of making Scotland the best place to grow up, where play is a valued part of daily life for all children and young people. It builds on the vision laid out in the Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision, and focuses on the importance of play for children's physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development.

The strategy emphasises children's right to play as outlined in Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It seeks to integrate play into Scotland's policies on education, health, and community planning. It is designed to support broader frameworks such as the Early Years Framework, Equally Well, and Achieving Our Potential.

The Action Plan outlines four key areas for action. These are detailed below:

- In the Home: Actions include providing parents and carers with resources and guidance to support play at home, promoting the importance of play-friendly environments, and offering training for staff working with families.
- At Nursery and School: The plan calls for embedding play into the education system through training for school staff, designing inclusive and stimulating play spaces, and increasing community access to school grounds outside school hours.
- In the Community: The focus is on creating more outdoor play spaces, incorporating play into community planning, and making public spaces accessible and welcoming for play. It also emphasises reducing barriers such as traffic and safety concerns.
- Positive Support for Play: The plan advocates for professional development for the play workforce, promoting a risk-benefit approach to play, and increasing media engagement to foster positive attitudes toward play.

A Play Strategy Implementation Group will oversee the progress, with input from statutory bodies, local authorities, and third-sector organisations. The plan also emphasises partnership working and engagement with children and young people to ensure that their voices are heard. The Play Strategy Action Plan outlines short, medium, and long-term goals to ensure that all children, regardless of background or ability, can benefit from diverse, adventurous, and inclusive play opportunities.

A More Active Scotland: Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan

A More Active Scotland: Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan outlines the Scottish Government's strategic framework to increase physical activity across all age groups, emphasising its benefits for health, well-being, and social inclusion. The plan aligns with the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-2030, aiming for a 15% reduction in physical inactivity by 2030. It emphasises the role of physical activity in preventing diseases, improving mental health, and fostering community engagement.

The plan is structured around six key outcomes: encouraging inactive individuals to become active, supporting lifelong physical activity, fostering physical competence from an early age, enhancing active infrastructure, promoting community well-being through sport, and expanding opportunities for participation and achievement in sport.

The Scottish Government commits to cross-sector collaboration, integrating physical activity into health, education, transport, and planning policies. Investment in infrastructure, such as walking and cycling networks and community sports hubs, is a priority. Additionally, the plan promotes equity and inclusion, ensuring that all demographics, including children, older adults, and underrepresented groups, have opportunities to engage in physical activity.

The plan positions Scotland as a leader in promoting active lifestyles, setting a global example in integrating physical activity into public health and policy.

National Park Context

Open Spaces Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park

The Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Open Space Audit was published in 2007 with support from Land Use Consultants (LUC). This work was commissioned to support the preparation of the National Park Local Development Plan and to examine to role of open spaces within rural settlements. Rural settlements present different challenges to urban environments in terms of access to open space as there is generally an abundance of 'open space' resources beyond settlement boundaries but potentially fewer options within built up areas. This key factor was taken into account when preparing the open space audit and is still relevant to the National Park and communities today.

It is important to recognise some of the attributes which make the open space resource within the National Park settlements valuable. Many of the settlements have an important historic character and this may include planned estate villages for which a central green may form an intrinsic role in the settlement character.

The open space audit focused on 28 settlements across the National Park and across each of the four local authority areas. The first step in preparing the audit was to define the term open space. The definition used was from Scottish Planning Policy 11: Open Space and Physical Activity - Consultation Draft (2006) and defined the term open space as including:

'green space consisting of any vegetated land or structure, water or geological feature in an urban area, including trees, woodland and paths, and civic space consisting of squares, market places and other paved or hard landscaped areas with a civic function.'

The audit provides a summary of the open spaces provision within each of the settlements included and highlights important features and key issues within each settlement. This information is then used to provide an overview of key issues for open space policy within the National Park.

The majority of open spaces surveyed fall within the amenity greenspace category. The distribution of other types of space shows a fairly even distribution, indicating a good spread of open space types across the National Park settlements as a whole.

The report goes into more detail about the lack of play provision for older children and the lack of sporting provision within smaller settlements. The audit also found that while there was some evidence of poor quality open spaces there were also examples of good quality open spaces within most settlements.

It is recognised that the current audit and approach is now quite dated and while it is not a legislative requirement for National Park Authority's to produce an Open Space Strategy, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park authority will consider preparing an updated strategy which also recognises the importance of connectivity between spaces. While communities within the National Park have good access to natural spaces, it is recognised that open spaces provide a different function.

Scottish Household Survey – Participation Rates by Physical Activity

NPF4 Policy 21 requires that the LDP should identify sites for outdoor recreation and that this should be based on an understanding of the needs and demand in the community. To assess needs and demands the Scottish Household Survey 2022 (SHS) was used to identify participation rates in physical activities.

Walking is the most frequent activity across all the local authority areas with a minimum of 60% of the population taking part. Walking is the most gender-neutral activity suggesting there are few barriers to participation. It should be noted that these results do not indicate the frequency of participation which is an important factor in ensuring that taking part in an activity translates into actual health benefits.

The paragraph below detail the participation rates of people across the four Local Authority areas.

In 2022, walking was the most popular recreational activity across all regions, with participation highest in Perth and Kinross (82%), followed by Argyll and Bute (75%), Stirling (73%), and West Dunbartonshire (60%). Swimming participation varied, ranging from 12% in Stirling and West Dunbartonshire to 20% in Perth and Kinross. Football engagement was relatively low, with Stirling having the highest participation

(9%), while other areas ranged between 4-5%. Cycling was most popular in Perth and Kinross (17%) and lowest in Argyll and Bute and West Dunbartonshire (12%). Keep fit/aerobics participation peaked in Perth and Kinross (20%) and was lowest in Argyll and Bute (7%). Multigym use and weight training were most common in West Dunbartonshire (19%) and least in Argyll and Bute (11%). Golf participation was highest in Perth and Kinross (7%) and lowest in West Dunbartonshire (3%). Running and jogging were most popular in Perth and Kinross (15%), with significantly lower participation in West Dunbartonshire (7%). Other activities, including snooker, dancing, and bowls, saw modest participation, with snooker and billiards peaking at 4% in Argyll and Bute and dancing most popular in Perth and Kinross (9%). Overall, Perth and Kinross had the highest participation in most activities, while West Dunbartonshire recorded the lowest engagement across several categories.

Sports Facilities

Information is still being collated on existing formal Sports Facilities and this will be added during the finalisation of the Topic Paper before submission to the Scottish Government.

Play Sufficiency Assessment

The Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Play Sufficiency Assessment (April 2025) is a consultative draft report prepared for the National Park Authority. It responds to the requirements of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and the 2023 Play Sufficiency Assessment Regulations, which mandate that planning authorities assess the adequacy of play opportunities for children under 18. This assessment aims to support inclusive placemaking, promote health and wellbeing, and contribute to the creation of 20-minute neighbourhoods.

The report highlights the vital role of play in children's development, mental and physical health, and social engagement. It recognises both formal and informal play spaces, including equipped play areas, natural environments, and open spaces, across 21 settlements in the National Park. Using GIS mapping, site visits, community consultation, and collaboration with local councils, the study assesses the quality, quantity, and accessibility of play provision.

Key findings include the existence of 32 equipped play areas and numerous natural play opportunities, though several communities lack adequate facilities. The assessment introduces a tailored set of play space standards adapted to the National Park's rural and dispersed geography, focusing on quality design, accessibility, and age-appropriate features. Recommendations are made for short-, medium-, and long-term improvements, such as equipment upgrades, improved connectivity, and enhanced inclusivity, especially for disabled children.

The audit includes settlement-level summaries, identifying priorities like adding adventure play, improving maintenance, and developing masterplans for strategic open spaces. The report concludes with the importance of integrating play provision into future Local Development Plans and underscores the social, environmental, and health benefits of accessible, high-quality play environments.

Policy 23 – Health and Safety

The purpose of this section is to provide background information on the subject of health and wellbeing. This Topic Paper looks at the issues which influence the health and wellbeing of local residents and looks at the key drivers for change that the LDP can help improve the health and wellbeing of the area. Considerable work has already been undertaken to better understand the social care infrastructure requirements across the National Park area and further detail can be found in Topic Paper 3 – Infrastructure First. Further analysis will be required once the spatial distribution of development is agreed through the Proposed Plan stage of LDP.

The topic paper also discusses current policies and guidance regarding health and planning. There are a multitude of factors that can impact on both health and wellbeing however this Topic Paper focuses on those areas where the LDP can have an influence.

National Context

This section of the report focuses on the National Policy which has been prepared with a focus on population health and wellbeing. This will directly inform the policy direction within the next iteration of the local development plan for the National Park.

Public Health Priorities for Scotland

Public Health Priorities for Scotland outlines six key priorities to improve public health outcomes across Scotland. It provides a comprehensive framework for addressing health inequalities and promoting wellbeing over the next decade, with a strong focus on prevention, early intervention, and collaboration among various sectors. The six priorities are detailed below:

- Vibrant, Healthy, and Safe Places and Communities: Emphasises the importance of creating well-designed, sustainable communities with safe housing, accessible services, and green spaces. Local decision-making and community involvement are highlighted as key to improving the physical and social environments that influence health.

- Flourishing in Early Years: Focuses on supporting children's health and wellbeing, starting from pregnancy. It highlights the impact of early childhood poverty, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and the need for quality early learning and childcare to ensure a strong start in life.

- Good Mental Wellbeing: Aims to promote mental health across all ages, reduce stigma, and prevent mental health issues through early intervention. Social and economic factors such as inequality are recognised as major contributors to mental health problems.

- Reducing Harm from Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs: Seeks to reduce substance use and the related harm. The strategy focuses not just on addiction but also on the harmful effects of everyday substance use, especially in deprived communities.

- Sustainable and Inclusive Economy with Equality of Outcomes for All: Addresses the impact of poverty and inequality on health, promoting inclusive economic growth. Tackling socio-economic disparities is key to improving public health and achieving fairness in outcomes for all.

- Eating Well, Healthy Weight, and Physical Activity: Focuses on improving diet and increasing physical activity as essential for reducing obesity and related health conditions. It also targets environmental and societal factors that influence lifestyle choices.

The strategy calls for a whole-system approach, involving public services, communities, the private sector, and individuals. The creation of a new national public health body, Public Health Scotland, is emphasised as a crucial step in supporting local and national efforts. Additionally, the plan commits to reducing health inequalities, promoting fairness, and using data-driven approaches to support change.

Place and Wellbeing: Integrating Land Use Planning and Public Health in Scotland

The *Place and Wellbeing: Integrating Land Use Planning and Public Health in Scotland* report highlights the critical intersection between land use planning and public health to promote well-being and reduce inequalities across Scotland. Developed in response to the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), and Scotland's six public health priorities, the report emphasises a whole-systems approach where planning decisions are aligned with public health objectives.

The document outlines the role of land use planning in shaping healthier communities by ensuring access to green spaces, active travel networks, quality housing, and sustainable infrastructure. It presents key challenges such as health inequalities, ageing populations, environmental factors, and the impact of COVID-19, which have reinforced the need for integrated planning. The Place Principle, adopted by the Scottish Government and COSLA, underpins the strategy, encouraging multi-agency collaboration to improve health outcomes and economic growth.

Key recommendations include stronger collaboration between planners and public health professionals, better data-sharing, improved community engagement, and embedding health considerations into planning policies. Ultimately, the report calls for a more systematic, evidence-based approach to planning, ensuring that Scotland's future developments contribute to healthier, more resilient, and equitable communities.

A Healthier Future: Scotland's Diet and Health Weight Delivery Plan

A Healthier Future: Scotland's Diet & Healthy Weight Delivery Plan outlines the Scottish Government's strategy to address obesity and promote healthier eating habits across the country. Recognising the significant public health challenge posed by poor diet and unhealthy weight, the plan sets a bold vision for Scotland where everyone eats well and maintains a healthy weight. It includes an ambitious target to halve childhood obesity by 2030 and reduce diet-related health inequalities.

The strategy focuses on five key outcomes: ensuring children have a healthy start in life, creating a food environment that supports healthier choices, improving access to effective weight management services, promoting leadership in diet and health initiatives, and addressing socio-economic inequalities related to diet and obesity. Measures include restricting unhealthy food promotions, increasing support for weight management programs, enhancing public education on nutrition, and reforming food labelling and advertising. The Scottish Government also aims to work with businesses and public institutions to encourage healthier food options and improve Scotland's food culture.

A critical part of the plan is targeted interventions for high-risk groups, especially children, low-income communities, and those with obesity-related health conditions like type 2 diabetes. The government will invest £42 million over five years in weight management programs and introduce stricter regulations on food advertising, marketing, and retail environments.

Mental Health Strategy 2017 – 2027

The Mental Health Strategy: 2017-2027 outlines Scotland's long-term commitment to improving mental health services, reducing stigma, and ensuring equality between mental and physical health. The strategy acknowledges that mental health challenges affect people across all aspects of life and emphasises prevention, early intervention, access to services, physical well-being, rights, and data-driven planning. It aims to provide person-centred, recovery-focused care, ensuring that individuals receive timely and appropriate support.

The plan sets out 40 key actions, including increasing the mental health workforce by 800 professionals, enhancing support for children and young people in schools, improving early interventions for at-risk groups, and ensuring better integration of mental health services

across primary care, emergency services, and justice settings. Special emphasis is placed on addressing mental health disparities among vulnerable populations, such as young offenders, people with substance use issues, and those experiencing rural isolation.

Overall, the strategy envisions a Scotland where mental health is treated with the same urgency as physical health, ensuring that people can access help quickly, receive high-quality care, and live healthier, fulfilling lives.

Place and Wellbeing Outcomes – Improvement Service

The National Place and Wellbeing Outcomes provide a focus for where place impacts on the wellbeing of people and planet. The Place and Wellbeing Outcomes emphasises the importance of designing and maintaining places that positively impact both people and the environment while addressing inequalities. The documentation included on the Improvement Service website highlight that Scotland faces challenges such as declining healthy life expectancy, climate change, and socio-economic inequalities, necessitating a collaborative, place-based approach to public services. The PWO framework is built on principles of equitable outcomes, sustainability, and systemic support, ensuring places foster health, wellbeing, and social inclusion. It aligns with NPF4, ensuring consistency across planning policies. Key themes include active travel, accessible public transport, quality natural spaces, community engagement, and economic opportunities.

The approach encourages local decision-making, integrating community voices to shape safe, inclusive, and sustainable places that support long-term public health, social equity, and environmental resilience.

Creating Hope Together: Scotland's Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2022 – 2025

The Creating Hope Together strategy outlines Scotland's suicide prevention action plan for 2022-2025, aiming to reduce suicide rates while addressing inequalities that contribute to suicide risk. It emphasises a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, ensuring that suicide prevention is embedded across public policies, healthcare, education, and communities. The plan is structured around four key outcomes:

1. Creating environments that protect against suicide risk, including psychological, social, cultural, economic, and physical factors.

2. Strengthening public awareness and response to suicide through education, community engagement, and reducing stigma.

3. Ensuring compassionate, high-quality, and timely support for individuals at risk, those affected by suicide, and their caregivers.

4. Building a well-coordinated, evidence-based approach, integrating lived experiences, research, and collaboration among national, local, and sectoral partners.

Key actions include developing suicide-safe public spaces, improving crisis response services, embedding suicide prevention in schools and workplaces, and providing better support for vulnerable groups such as young people, neurodivergent individuals, and those affected by trauma, poverty, or addiction.

The action relating to safe public spaces is a key area that Planning can have an influence and help to work towards meeting this objective.

National Guidance on Action to Address Suicides at Locations of Concern

This resource provides guidance on preventing suicides at identified locations of concern by supporting community planning partnerships (CPPs) and multi-agency groups in implementing effective strategies. Locations of concern are public sites where suicides have occurred, such as bridges, cliffs, railways, remote areas, and bodies of water. Preventative measures aim to restrict access to means of suicide, enable intervention by third parties, and signpost support services. A five-step approach is recommended: multi-agency collaboration, data collection and analysis, reviewing intervention options, planning, and ongoing monitoring. Effective physical interventions include physical barriers, restricted access, surveillance and signage with helpline information. Integrating suicide prevention into infrastructure planning is key to long-term safety.

Cleaner Air for Scotland 2: Towards a Better Plan for Everyone

The Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 (CAFS 2) strategy outlines Scotland's plan to improve air quality and protect public health while addressing climate change and environmental sustainability. It builds on the 2015 Cleaner Air for Scotland strategy and aligns with other national policies on transport, planning, health, and energy.

The strategy follows 10 key themes:

1. Health, A Precautionary Approach – Recognising the severe impacts of air pollution on respiratory and cardiovascular health, particularly among vulnerable populations. It supports proactive air quality improvements beyond legal compliance.

2. Integrated Policy – Aligning air quality policies with climate change, noise reduction, and land use strategies to ensure co-benefits across sectors.

3. Placemaking – Embedding air quality considerations into urban planning, using nature-based solutions and the National Planning Framework 4 to create healthier, more sustainable communities.

4. Data Improvements – Enhancing air quality, transport, and health data collection to guide policy and increase public awareness.

5. Public Engagement and Behaviour Change – Promoting awareness and encouraging sustainable choices, such as reducing car use and adopting cleaner transport options.

6. Industrial Emissions Regulation – Strengthening policies to maintain or exceed EU environmental standards post-Brexit, ensuring industries comply with strict emission controls.

7. Tackling Non-Transport Emissions – Addressing pollution from domestic heating and agriculture, particularly ammonia emissions from farming.

8. Transport Emission Reductions – Encouraging active travel (walking, cycling), public transport, low-emission zones, and cleaner vehicle technologies to cut air pollution from road transport.

9. Governance and Accountability – Strengthening responsibilities at national and local levels to ensure effective policy implementation.

10. Monitoring and Progress Review – Tracking progress over five years, with a mid-term review in 2024 to assess policy effectiveness.

The strategy highlights transport and urban air pollution as key challenges while recognising progress made in reducing emissions from industry, energy, and vehicle exhausts. Scotland aims to become a leader in air quality improvement, ensuring that cleaner air contributes to public health, economic resilience, and environmental sustainability.

Long Term Monitoring of Health Inequalities 2021

The Long-Term Monitoring of Health Inequalities report (January 2021) provides a detailed analysis of health disparities in Scotland, focusing on differences between the most and least deprived areas using a range of indicators over time. While some progress has been made - such as a reduction in absolute gaps for indicators like coronary heart disease deaths, alcohol-related admissions, and healthy life expectancy for females - many health inequalities persist or have worsened. For instance, healthy life expectancy for males has declined, and gaps in premature mortality and drug-related hospital admissions have increased significantly.

The report uses both absolute measures (e.g., the gap in outcomes between most and least deprived areas) and relative measures (Relative Index of Inequality, or RII) to assess inequality trends. Key findings include a rising RII in premature mortality, mental wellbeing, and alcohol-specific deaths. Mental wellbeing, as measured by the WEMWBS, has remained static overall, but inequalities remain stark, with those in deprived areas significantly more likely to report poor mental health.

The document covers a wide range of indicators, including low birthweight, self-assessed health, limiting long-term conditions, hospital admissions, and cause-specific mortality. It highlights that while overall mortality rates have declined over time, improvements are unevenly distributed, with deprived areas seeing slower progress or worsening outcomes. The report underscores the importance of sustained, targeted interventions and continuous monitoring to reduce long-standing health inequalities across Scotland.

National Park Context

The Scottish Public Health Observatory – Online Profiles

The four local authorities covering the National Park demonstrate varied performance in key health, social, and economic indicators compared to the Scottish average:

Argyll and Bute - The local authority outperforms the Scottish average in several key areas but faces challenges in others. Active travel to work is significantly higher at 28.92% compared to the national average of 16.93%. The area also has a lower crime rate of 19.19 per 1,000 population, compared to Scotland's 28.82. Additionally, a larger proportion of people aged 65+ with high care needs are cared for at home, at 50.51%, well above the Scottish average of 35.31%. However, the area has higher alcohol-related hospital admissions at 689.97 per 100,000, compared to the national average of 611.05, and road traffic accident casualties are also above average at 64.08 per 100,000 versus 54.7. Notably, 39.53% of the population live in the 15% most access-deprived areas, far exceeding the Scottish average of 15%. Despite these challenges, life expectancy for males and females in the area is above the national average.

Perth and Kinross - The local authority demonstrates mixed performance compared to the Scottish average across various indicators. Active travel to work is higher at 20%, compared to the national average of 16.93%, and the crime rate is significantly lower at 16 per 1,000 population, compared to 28.82. Alcohol-related hospital admissions are also notably lower at 426.97 per 100,000, compared to the Scottish average of 611.05. However, challenges include a higher proportion of people living in the 15% most access-deprived areas (31.23% versus 15%) and a greater rate of psychiatric patient hospitalisations at 281.55 per 100,000, exceeding the national average of 230.66. Additionally, the percentage of people aged 65+ with high levels of care needs cared for at home is lower than the Scottish average, at 26.73% compared to 35.31%. Despite these disparities, life expectancy for both males and females in the area surpasses the national average.

Stirling - The local authority shows a mixed performance compared to the Scottish average. While alcohol-related hospital admissions are lower at 488.99 per 100,000 compared to 611.05, and the crime rate is also below average at 24.99 per 1,000 population versus 28.82, active travel to work is less common at 13.92%, falling short of the national average of 16.93%. Additionally, 12% of working-age adults have low or no qualifications, slightly higher than the Scottish average of 11.64%. A higher proportion of residents (18.34%) live in the 15%

most access-deprived areas, compared to the national figure of 15%. Emergency admissions among those aged 65+ are significantly higher at 8,793.39 per 100,000, compared to the Scottish average of 6,824.16, though the percentage of older adults with high care needs being cared for at home is slightly above average at 36.89% compared to 35.31%. Notably, life expectancy for both males and females in the area exceeds the Scottish average.

West Dunbartonshire - The local authority faces significant challenges compared to the Scottish average across several health and social indicators. Active travel to work is notably lower at 9.68% compared to 16.93%, and alcohol-related hospital admissions are substantially higher at 973.68 per 100,000, well above the national average of 611.05. Smoking-attributable deaths are also alarmingly higher at 417.22 per 100,000, compared to 270.02. The crime rate is slightly above average at 30 per 1,000 population, and 17.55% of the population is income deprived, exceeding the Scottish average of 12.07%. Additionally, 24.11% of residents are prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression, or psychosis, compared to the national figure of 20.14%. While 15.07% of the population lives in the 15% most access-deprived areas, aligning closely with the Scottish average of 15%, the percentage of people aged 65+ with high care needs being cared for at home is lower at 30.88% compared to 35.31%. Life expectancy for males and females in the area is below the Scottish average, further highlighting health inequalities.

In summary, while each area shows strengths - such as low crime in Stirling and Perth and Kinross, or strong active travel in Argyll and Bute - they also face distinct challenges. Argyll and Bute struggles with access and alcohol-related harm; Perth and Kinross with psychiatric admissions and limited home care; Stirling with access deprivation and older adult hospitalisations; and West Dunbartonshire with the most significant health and income inequalities. Despite these regional differences, common concerns persist across all four areas, particularly around healthcare access, deprivation, and health inequalities.

Health Boards

Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park is covered by four Health Boards:

1. NHS Highland – Covers the northern areas of The Park, including parts of Stirlingshire and Argyll & Bute.

2. NHS Forth Valley – Covers areas including Callander and other parts of Stirlingshire.

3. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde – Covers the southern and western areas, including Balloch and parts of West Dunbartonshire.

4. NHS Tayside – Covers the Perth and Kinross area to the north, east of The Park.

These health boards provide primary, secondary, and emergency healthcare services to communities within the National Park, ensuring access to hospitals, GP services, and mental health support.

Health and Social Care Partnerships

The four NHS health boards covering Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park are supported by four Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs), which integrate services across local authorities, health boards, and third-sector organisations. Their goal is to coordinate efficient, responsive care for local communities.

The HSCPs covering the National Park are:

- Clackmannanshire & Stirling HSCP
- West Dunbartonshire HSCP
- Perth & Kinross HSCP
- Argyll & Bute HSCP

Each HSCP focuses on improving healthcare integration and service delivery, ensuring they meet the specific needs of The Park's population.

SIMD Analysis – Health Domain Rank

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) measures deprivation across small areas (data zones) in Scotland based on factors such as income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime, and housing. For the National Park, the SIMD data is relevant as it can highlight disparities within different parts of The Park area.

Although the National Park itself is not categorised as one of the most deprived areas in Scotland, certain data zones within or near The Park may show varying levels of deprivation, particularly in terms of access to services due to the rural nature of the area. Geographic access to healthcare, education, and other essential services can be challenging in such remote areas, which is a key domain in the SIMD assessment.

The data below shows the specific health ranking for the major settlements across the National Park. The ranking is scored between 1 and 10 with 1 being the most deprived and 10 being the least deprived. The data illustrates that the National Park communities are all ranked in the least deprived areas.

The health domain rankings across towns and villages show notable variations in health and wellbeing indicators. St Fillans, Strathyre, and parts of Callander have the highest health domain ranking of 9, indicating strong health outcomes. Balloch, Luss, and Aberfoyle rank slightly lower at 6-7, while Lochgoilhead, Ardentinny, and Blairmore/Kilmun/Strone have a moderate rank of 5-6. Several areas, including Arrochar, Inveruglas, Crianlarich, Tyndrum, Killin, and Croftamie, rank 8, suggesting relatively good health conditions. In Callander, the West end and McLaren High School area rank 9, but along the High Street, the ranking drops to 6, indicating some disparities within the town. Drymen shows the most significant contrast, with the north ranking 6 and the south ranking 10, reflecting differing health conditions within a small geographical area. Overall, these rankings highlight varying health outcomes, with some areas showing strong health indicators while others experience moderate disparities.

Health Service Mapping

A key element of health and safety of the population is the availability of health and social care facilities. As a rural area, the health facilities are often located outwith the National Park and not necessarily within easy access of all settlements. Below are summaries of each of the key types of health care facilities and how many are located within each local authority area:

- *A&E and Minor Injuries Units* - Access to Accident & Emergency (A+E) and Minor Injuries Units is limited within the region, with Argyll and Bute having the only facility within the National Park. Perth and Kinross, Stirling, and West Dunbartonshire each have one unit, but all are located outside The Park, meaning residents may need to travel for emergency medical care. This highlights potential challenges in accessing urgent healthcare services, particularly for those in more remote or rural locations.
- *Pharmacies* - Access to pharmacies varies across the National Park, with Stirling having the highest availability at six, followed by West Dunbartonshire with three and Perth and Kinross with one. Argyll and Bute have no pharmacies within The Park boundary, potentially creating challenges for residents in accessing essential medications and healthcare advice. This distribution indicates disparities in pharmaceutical services, with rural areas likely facing greater difficulties in obtaining prescriptions and over-the-counter healthcare support.
- *Opticians* - Access to opticians is limited across much of the National Park, with the closest facilities for Argyll and Bute in Dunoon, for Perth and Kinross in Crieff, and for Stirling in Balfron or Dunblane. In contrast, West Dunbartonshire has two opticians, offering

better local access to eye care services. This highlights potential challenges for residents in more rural areas who may need to travel significant distances for routine eye examinations and vision care.

- *Dentists* - Access to dental services varies across the National Park, with West Dunbartonshire having the highest availability at five dentists, followed by Stirling with three and Argyll and Bute with one. Perth and Kinross has no dental services within the area, potentially requiring residents to travel for routine and emergency dental care.
- *GPs* - There are 14 GP practices serving communities within Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, with seven located inside The Park and seven outside, supporting areas like Strachur, St Fillan's, and Croftamie. Across Scotland, GP list sizes have generally increased, and in The Park, 10 of the 14 practices have grown since 2015, with an average list size of 3,378 patients. Lochgoilhead, Kilmun, and Alexandria practices have seen a decline, while others face rising demand. Arrochar and Strachur practices (Argyll & Bute) have grown, while Lochgoilhead and Kilmun have declined. Comrie Medical Practice (Perth & Kinross), serving St Fillan's, has expanded. Stirling practices, including Aberfoyle and Callander, have grown significantly, while Drymen and Killin saw moderate increases. In West Dunbartonshire, no practices are inside The Park, but four in Balloch serve local residents. Loch Lomond Surgery has declined by 681 patients, while Oakview and Lennox practices have grown. These trends highlight the need for targeted healthcare planning and infrastructure investment.

Travelling distance to a Hospital A+E Department

Within The Park, many communities are located more than a 30-minute drive from a Hospital A&E department, creating challenges in accessing emergency medical care. However, Balloch, Croftamie, and parts of the East and South of Callander are exceptions, as they fall within a 30-minute drive to an A&E facility.

When considering both A&E and Minor Injuries Units (MIUs), a significant portion of the Northwest, North, and East of The Park still lacks access within 30 minutes by car. However, the following communities do fall within a 30-minute travel time to either A&E or an MIU: Balloch, Luss, Arrochar, Tarbet, Succoth, Gartocharn, Drymen, Croftamie, Balmaha, Gartmore, Aberfoyle, Callander, Ardentinny, Blairmore, Strone, and Kilmun.

This highlights a major gap in emergency healthcare coverage, particularly for remote communities in The Park's northern and eastern regions, where residents may face significant travel times for urgent medical attention.

Mental Health and Awareness of locations of concern for suicide

In 2022, Scotland's suicide mortality rate was 13.9 per 100,000 people, with males being 2.9 times more likely to die by suicide than females. Suicide rates were also significantly affected by socioeconomic inequalities, with the mortality rate in the most deprived areas being 2.6 times higher than in the least deprived areas. This disparity is greater than the 1.8 times gap observed for all causes of death. Suicide rates were highest among individuals aged 25-44 and 45-64, while rates among those aged 65-74 have increased consecutively over the past five years.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a rise in self-reported cases of depression, with one in five adults in the UK experiencing depressive symptoms in 2020, compared to one in ten before the pandemic (Mental Health Foundation, 2020). Certain groups, including women, younger individuals, those with lower incomes, and people with disabilities or long-term health conditions, were more likely to report depressive symptoms, highlighting the pandemic's disproportionate impact on mental health.

The Scottish Public Health Observatory profiles provide a breakdown of adult mental health data for each of the Local Authority areas. While it is difficult to draw specific conclusions for The National Park from this data it is useful to understand that the different areas of the National Park experience different challenges which impact mental health outcomes. An overarching summary of each of the Local Authority areas is detailed below. It is worth noting that the data below is for the whole Local Authority area.

West Dunbartonshire

The Adult Mental Health Summary for West Dunbartonshire highlights several challenges in community well-being, mental health outcomes, and structural determinants compared to Scotland's national averages.

In terms of community determinants, a lower proportion of adults (17.7%) reported feeling lonely in the past week compared to Scotland's 23.0%, and 16.4% felt they could influence local decisions, slightly below the national average (17.8%). Trust and belonging within neighbourhoods are slightly lower than Scotland's figures, and volunteering participation (13.1%) is notably lower than the national rate (21.6%).

Mental health outcomes present significant concerns. Hospital stays for alcohol-related mental or behavioural disorders (838.1 per 100,000) are much higher than the national average (539.3 per 100,000). Symptoms of common mental health problems (34.0%) exceed the Scottish rate (25.0%), while suicide rates (19.0 per 100,000) are also above the national figure (17.5 per 100,000).

West Dunbartonshire faces significant mental health challenges, particularly concerning alcohol-related disorders, mental health symptoms, and suicide rates.

Stirling

The Adult Mental Health Summary for Stirling provides insights into various factors affecting mental well-being in the area compared to national averages.

In terms of community determinants, 18.8% of adults reported feeling lonely in the past week, which is lower than the national average (23.0%). Stirling performs well in community engagement, with 20.5% of adults feeling they can influence local decisions (higher than Scotland's 17.8%), and 88.5% of adults trust their neighbours, exceeding the national figure (82.3%). Volunteering participation (25.9%) is also higher than the Scottish average (21.6%).

Mental health outcomes are mixed. Hospital stays for alcohol-related mental or behavioural disorders (512.5 per 100,000) are slightly below the Scottish average (539.3). However, 27.0% of adults report symptoms of common mental health problems, which is slightly above Scotland's rate (25.0%). The suicide rate (14.0 per 100,000) is lower than the national average (17.5 per 100,000).

Stirling performs better than the national average in community trust, volunteering, financial well-being, and neighbourhood satisfaction. While mental health concerns and limiting long-term illnesses remain challenges, the suicide rate and alcohol-related hospitalisations are lower than the national average. Access to open spaces and physical activity levels are strengths, suggesting a positive environment for well-being. However common mental health symptoms indicate areas for potential improvement.

Argyll and Bute

The Adult Mental Health Summary for Argyll & Bute presents key indicators related to mental well-being, social engagement, and structural determinants, comparing them with Scotland's national averages.

In terms of community determinants, 25.2% of adults reported feeling lonely in the past week, which is higher than the national average (23.0%). However, Argyll & Bute shows stronger community trust and engagement, with 20.4% of adults feeling they can influence local decisions, above the national rate of 17.8%. Additionally, 83.1% feel a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood, and 89.6% trust most people in their area, both slightly above the Scottish averages. Volunteering levels are also strong, with 26.5% participating in the past year, surpassing the national rate of 21.6%.

Mental health outcomes are mixed. Hospital stays for alcohol-related mental or behavioural disorders (626.4 per 100,000) are higher than the national rate (539.3 per 100,000), while symptoms of common mental health problems (25.0%) match the Scottish average. The mental well-being score (48.8) is above the national score of 47.9, and suicide rates (17.3 per 100,000) are nearly in line with Scotland's rate of 17.5 per 100,000.

Argyll & Bute has strong community cohesion, high levels of trust, and good neighbourhood satisfaction, but loneliness, long-term health conditions, and alcohol-related hospital stays remain concerns. Financial stability is slightly weaker, but homelessness, discrimination, and housing conditions are better than national averages. Addressing mental health challenges, lifestyle behaviours, and economic resilience will be key in improving overall well-being.

Perth and Kinross

The Adult Mental Health Summary for Perth & Kinross highlights key factors influencing mental well-being in the area compared to Scotland's national averages.

Community engagement and trust are strong in Perth & Kinross. Loneliness levels (19.7%) are lower than the national average (23.0%), and 26.4% of adults feel they can influence local decisions, significantly higher than Scotland's 17.8%. Additionally, 84.5% of adults trust their neighbours, exceeding the national rate (82.3%), and volunteering participation (29.4%) is notably higher than Scotland's 21.6%.

Mental health outcomes present mixed findings. Hospital stays for alcohol-related mental or behavioural disorders (466.4 per 100,000) are lower than Scotland's 539.3 per 100,000, and the mental well-being score (49.7) is higher than the national score (47.9). However, common mental health symptoms (26.0%) are slightly above the national figure (25.0%), and suicide rates (22.5 per 100,000) exceed Scotland's 17.5 per 100,000.

Perth & Kinross performs well in community engagement, trust, volunteering, physical health, and financial stability, contributing to strong overall well-being. However, suicide rates, discrimination, and poor housing conditions remain concerns. While alcohol-related hospitalisations are lower, common mental health symptoms persist, highlighting areas where further support may be needed.

NPF4 Data Atlas – Anti-depressant usage

The NPF4 data atlas provides a high-level overview of the mental health issues in the National Park by providing spatial information on the numbers of the population on anti-depressants within each of the local authority areas. The mapping indicates that West Dunbartonshire

council area has the highest levels of anti-depressant usage, followed by Stirling Council and Perth and Kinross Council areas. The Argyll and Bute council area has the lowest proportion of the population using anti-depressants.

Locations of Control or Major Accident Hazard establishments and/or pipelines

A search was completed of the Control of Major Accident Hazards public database and there were no establishments in the National Park boundary included.

Air Quality

Air quality is an important factor in considering the health and well-being of an area. Poor air quality causes increased incidences of respiratory disease and other illnesses. Air pollution also has negative impacts upon the surrounding natural environment including designated habitats. There is a statutory requirement for the LDP to accord with any Air Quality Action Plans for Air Quality Management Areas.

Air quality in the National Park is good, noting the predominately rural area. This is on the basis that there are no major industrial or commercial sources of air pollutants within the area and road traffic is therefore the main source of local air pollution. Other sources of air pollution in the National Park are industry, energy and agriculture, as well as some household activities, such as heating and cooking.

Noise Pollution

Noise can adversely affect quality of life, amenity, public health and environmental quality. By guiding development to the right locations and where necessary, specifying design and layout issues, the LDP can help to prevent and minimise the consequences of noise.

The Environmental Noise Directive requires, on a five yearly cycle, the Scottish Government to produce strategic noise maps. The Directive was transposed into Scottish legislation under the Environmental Noise (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and amended by the Environmental Noise (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2018 following the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union.

The three main objectives are:

- to determine the noise exposure of the population through noise mapping;
- to make information available on environmental noise to the public; and

- to establish action plans based on the mapping results, to reduce levels where necessary, and to preserve environmental noise quality where it is good.

In order to meet the regulations for managing noise, Scotland has prepared noise maps. Scotland's noise maps provide a geographical representation of noise levels across the country, highlighting areas where people are exposed to high levels of environmental noise. These maps are produced every five years in accordance with the Environmental Noise Directive. The key objectives of noise mapping are to assess population exposure to environmental noise, ensure public access to noise-related information, and develop action plans to mitigate high noise levels while preserving areas with good environmental noise quality.

A review of the mapping prepared for Scotland indicated that Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park is predominantly a tranquil area with low ambient noise levels, characterised by its natural landscapes and limited urban development. However, certain localised sources contribute to noise within The Park:

1. In Lochgoilhead, residents have reported a persistent low-frequency noise, often referred to as the "Lochgoilhead Hum." Investigations suggest potential sources, including operations from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) noise range, which conducts trials involving submarines and frigates on Loch Goil.

2. Additional contributors to low-frequency noise in Lochgoilhead include operations from Corrow Farm, housing estate and construction offices with equipment running continuously, and the Scottish Water Waste Water Treatment Works, where operational pumps and turbines have been noted as noise sources.

3. The A82 road, especially along the northern stretch of Loch Lomond, has a notable effect on The Park's noise levels. Due to the surrounding topography, traffic noise can carry and be heard from elevated locations, including the summit of Ben Lomond. If not carefully planned and managed, upcoming upgrades to the A82 could further intensify this noise impact.

4. Water sports, such as speed boating and jet skiing, contribute to noise pollution on Loch Lomond. To address this, byelaws have been implemented to regulate these activities, aiming to preserve The Park's natural tranquillity.

Overall, while The Park maintains its reputation for quietness, localised activities can influence the ambient noise level.

Census 2022 – Health Data

In 2022, the total population of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park was approx. 14,566 people. The majority of residents reported being in good or very good health, with 48.5% (7,062 people) stating their health was very good and 31.9% (4,642 people)

reporting good health. A smaller portion, 14.0% (2,045 people), described their health as fair. Meanwhile, 4.2% (612 people) indicated they were in bad health, and just 1.4% (205 people) reported very bad health. Overall, more than 80% of the population described their health positively, while only around 5.6% reported being in poor health.

Within this population, 1,283 individuals reported being deaf or partially hearing impaired, while 333 people were blind or partially vision impaired. A smaller number - 40 people - reported experiencing full or partial loss of voice or difficulty speaking. In terms of cognitive and developmental health, 592 individuals had one or more learning disabilities, learning difficulties, or developmental disorders. Physical disabilities affected 1,339 residents, while 1,156 people reported living with a mental health condition. The most commonly reported long-term health issue was a long-term illness, disease, or condition, affecting 3,317 individuals. These figures indicate that while the majority of residents do not report major impairments, a significant portion of the population lives with a range of long-term health conditions and disabilities.

The census also asked residents if their day to day activities were limited as a result of their health. 1,369 individuals (9.4%) reported that their day-to-day activities were limited a lot due to disability, while 2,052 people (14.1%) said their activities were limited a little. The majority of residents - 11,146 people (76.5%) - reported no limitations to their day-to-day activities.

This indicates that while a significant majority of the population experiences no disability-related limitations, approximately 23.5% of residents reported some degree of limitation in their daily lives.

According to Scotland's Census 2022, there were 14,330 people aged 3 and over living in Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park. Of this population, 1,933 individuals (13.5%) provided unpaid care to others. The majority of unpaid carers - 1,183 people - offered between 1 to 19 hours of care per week. A further 188 individuals provided care for 20 to 34 hours weekly, while 125 people provided care for 35 to 49 hours. Notably, 441 residents were engaged in intensive unpaid care, giving 50 or more hours per week. Meanwhile, 12,397 people (86.5%) reported that they did not provide any unpaid care. These figures highlight the significant role unpaid carers play in the local community, with nearly one in seven residents offering some form of unpaid support to others.

The data highlights that the majority of residents within The National Park report good overall health, with over 80% describing their health as good or very good. However, there remains a notable portion of the population affected by health challenges, including long-term illnesses, physical and mental health conditions, and disabilities. Approximately one in four residents experiences some level of limitation in their daily activities due to health issues. Additionally, the presence of nearly 2,000 unpaid carers - 13.5% of the population aged 3 and over - reflects a strong culture of informal care within the community, with a significant number providing intensive weekly support. Together,

these figures paint a picture of a generally healthy but aging or care-involved population, underscoring the importance of accessible healthcare services and support systems for both individuals with health conditions and the carers who assist them.

Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

This section will be completed following the end of the engagement period and prior to inclusion in the final Evidence Report.

Summary of Implication for the Proposed Plan

The implications of the evidence for the Proposed Plan may be summarised as follows:

Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings

- The new Local Development Plan (LDP) should prioritise the redevelopment of brownfield, vacant and derelict land across the National Park, particularly in and around existing settlements, to support regeneration, reduce land wastage, and make efficient use of infrastructure.
- The new LDP should encourage the adaptive reuse of historic or traditional buildings at risk, especially in areas with high vacancy or underuse. The LDP should promote development that sensitively restores these structures, preserving their character while meeting modern standards for energy efficiency, accessibility, and functionality.
- The new LDP should aim to safeguard ecologically valuable brownfield sites, balancing regeneration with nature conservation. The LDP could assess these sites for biodiversity before promoting redevelopment and designate them for conservation or green infrastructure where appropriate. Where development occurs, require biodiversity assessments and measures to protect, enhance, or offset biodiversity loss.

Zero Waste

- The new LDP should aim to promote a circular economy and integrate waste reduction in all developments.
- The new LDP should promote sustainable waste infrastructure within or close to settlements by supporting the development of local recycling points and food waste facilities.
- Policies should require new developments – particularly housing, tourism, and commercial uses – to demonstrate how they will minimise waste during construction and operation. This includes encouraging the use of recycled materials in construction.

Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods

- It will be key for the new LDP to develop a rural-appropriate interpretation of 20-minute neighbourhoods, recognising that in dispersed and low-density rural communities, access to key services and facilities solely by walking or cycling may not always be practical. The LDP should instead focus on enhancing local service provision, improving public and community transport links, supporting digital infrastructure for remote access to services, and promoting multi-use community hubs. This flexible approach can help deliver the core principles of 20-minute neighbourhoods while respecting the unique rural character of the National Park.
- In developing the new LDP place-based engagement should be used to identify local needs and opportunities. By working with residents, businesses, and community groups, the LDP can target policies on issues like services, travel, digital access, housing, and jobs. This approach will ensure that development reflects local priorities and supports community empowerment and local living.

Play, Recreation and Sport

- The new LDP should protect and enhance land for outdoor recreation and sport. It should safeguard existing spaces and identify gaps, ensuring facilities are accessible, inclusive, and well-maintained to support wellbeing, community cohesion, and active lifestyles across the National Park.
- The new LDP should ensure high-quality, inclusive design of recreational spaces that connect with wider green and blue networks. Designs should support safety, biodiversity, seasonal use, and promote active travel, nature-based recreation, and climate resilience, while enhancing the National Park's landscape character.
- The new LDP should prioritise projects that improve access to nature and reduce barriers for all age groups and abilities. The Local Development Plan should support initiatives that make it easier for everyone - regardless of age, mobility, or personal circumstance - to enjoy and benefit from natural spaces. This aligns with the National Park's goals of enhancing wellbeing, supporting inclusivity, and encouraging connection with the natural environment.
- The new LDP should safeguard existing play spaces, sports pitches, and recreational facilities from redevelopment unless alternative provision of equal or greater community value is secured within the local area.
- The new LDP should support innovative rural solutions for recreation, such as nature-based play areas, community-run sports hubs, or shared-use facilities in villages where traditional infrastructure may not be viable.

Health and Safety

- The new LDP will ensure that planning policies contribute to safer, healthier environments, particularly in areas with proximity to derelict sites or environmental hazards (e.g., radon or major pipelines).

- The new LDP should consider policies to address environmental health and safety risks, identifying hazardous areas and setting clear development criteria. It should require impact assessments and mitigation where needed, and promote safe, community-focused reuse - such as green infrastructure or recreation - while prioritising health and safety.
- The new LDP should encourage active travel infrastructure that considers road safety and separation from heavy vehicle routes, especially in areas where walking and cycling routes may intersect with fast or busy roads.

Statements of Agreement / Dispute

This section will be completed following the end of the engagement period and prior to inclusion in the final Evidence Report.

Appendix

Figure 1 – Buildings at Risk across Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
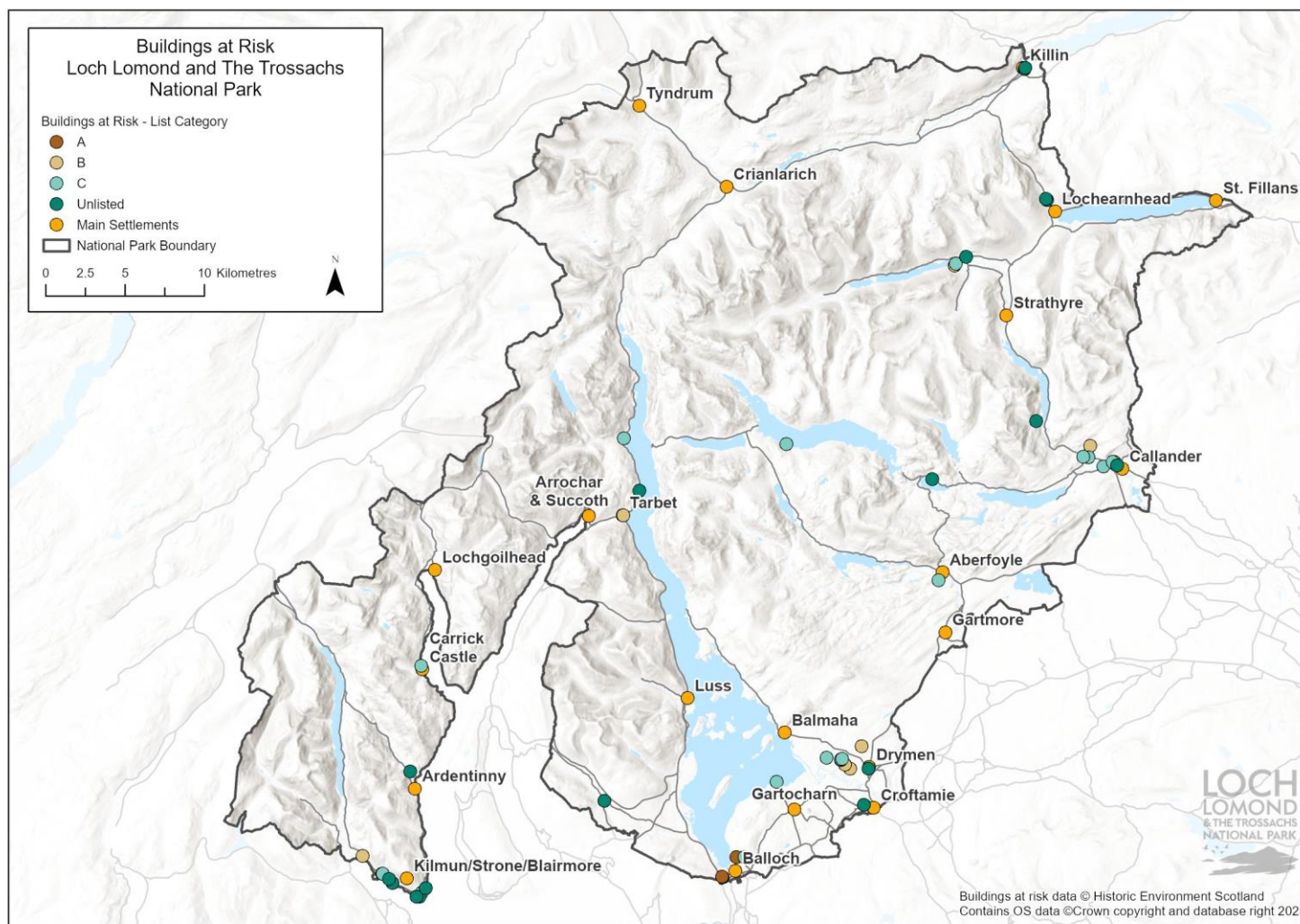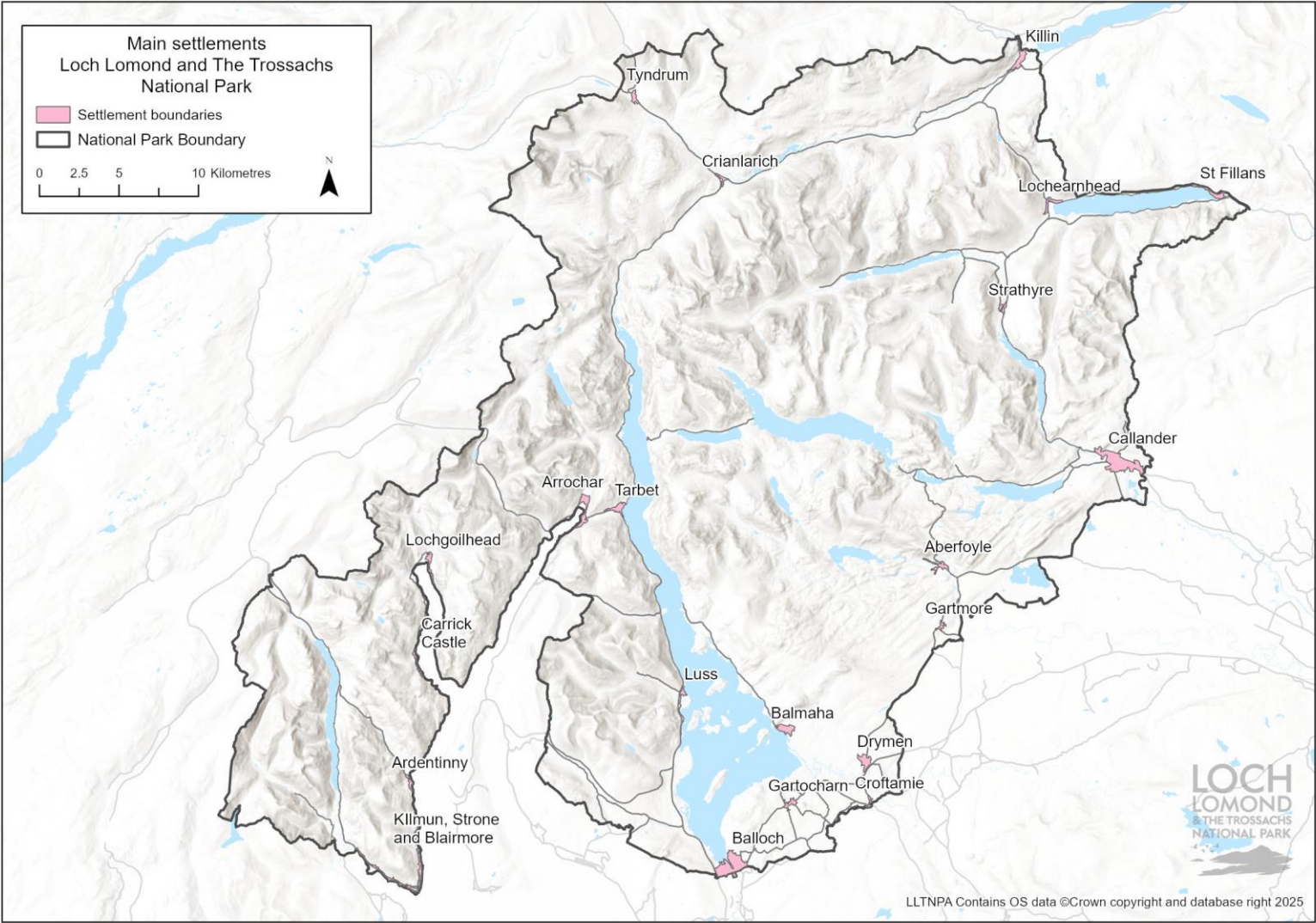
Figure 2 - Main settlements within The National Park
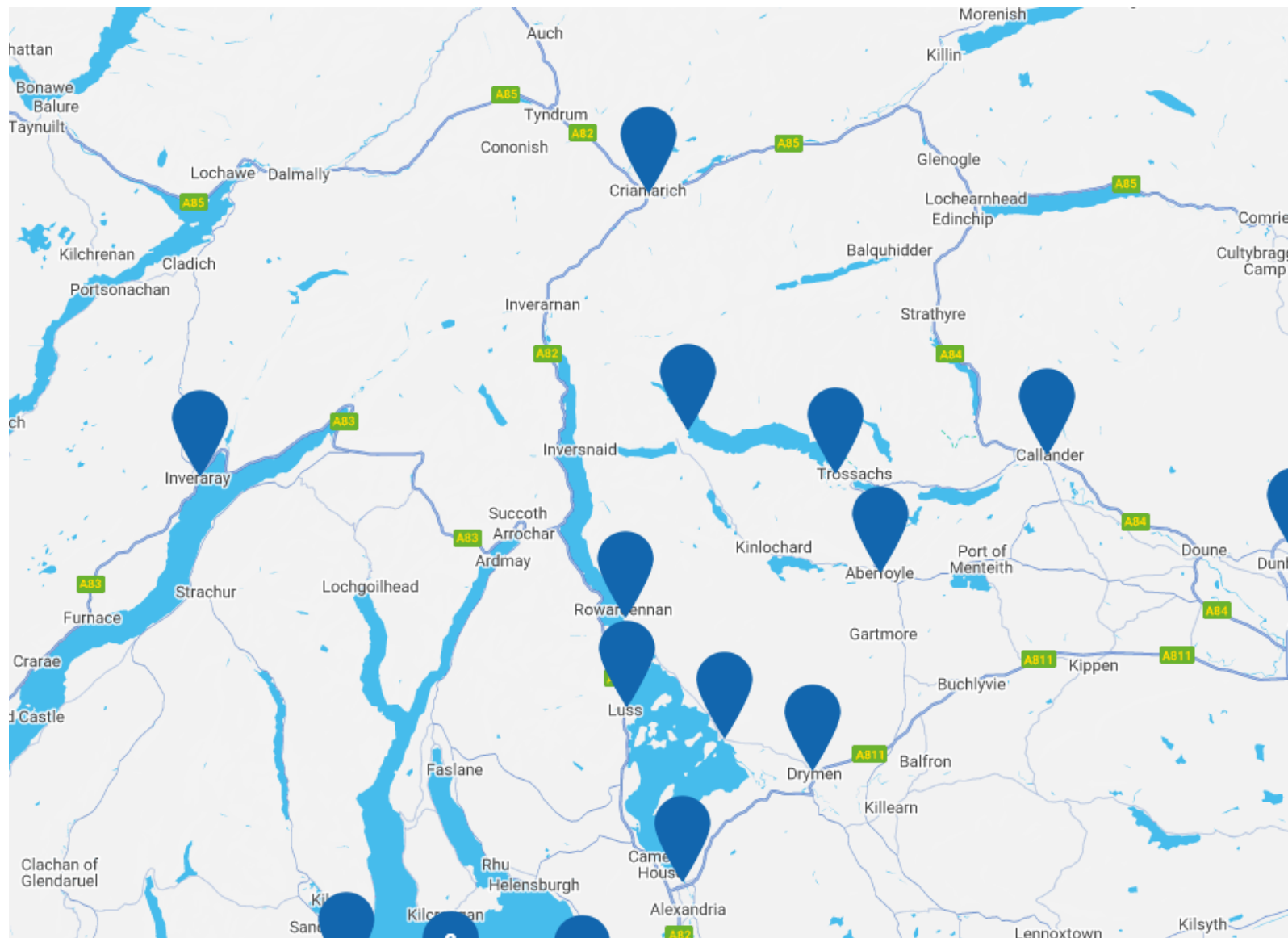
Figure 3 – Locations of Scottish Water Water Re-fill Stations

Figure 4 – Place Based Locality Areas